

The

Spiritual Reformation.

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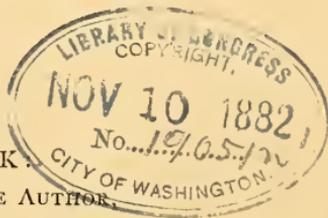
THE
BATTLE-GROUND
OF THE
SPIRITUAL REFORMATION.

BY
S. B. BRITTAN, M.D.,
EDITOR-AT-LARGE.

Truth is the naked sword of the Spirit.—*Author.*

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"Take the bright sword that flashes from the skies,
O Man, and smite the hosts of Despotism."—*Spirit of Shelley.*

He that is first in his own cause seemeth just ;
But his neighbor cometh and searcheth him.—*Solomon.*



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By S. B. BRITTAN.

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TO
MR. LUTHER COLBY,
The Journalistic Standard-Bearer
OF
MODERN SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA ;
FOR HIS
LONG SERVICE AND UNWAVERING FIDELITY
TO
A NOBLE, BUT UNPOPULAR CAUSE ;
AND,
ESPECIALLY, FOR HIS CONSTANT ENDEAVORS
TO
RENDER THE WRITER'S RECENT LABORS
MORE EFFECTUAL FOR GOOD ;

THIS VOLUME IS

Affectionately Inscribed,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

BATTLE-GROUND
OF THE
SPIRITUAL REFORMATION.

INTRODUCTION.

THE history of the development of religious ideas furnishes no parallel to the progress of Modern Spiritualism, whether we consider its essential nature, the means employed in its advancement, or the rapidity of its triumphs. It is true that different systems of religion have been widely propagated, and it may almost literally be said that nations have been converted in a day. We cannot search the archives of remote ages for historical illustrations, but will limit our survey to the Christian era. Constantine at once embraced the religion of Jesus when he saw its burning ensign above the horizon. Under his authority the faith so impressively symbolized consecrated splendid temples where the manger and the cross had stood ; the Goth was subjugated, and altars to the new religion were reared among the ruins of Byzantium. But the arm of imperial power and the sword of the conqueror were the instruments of its propagation, and the blood-stained banners of victorious armies waved over the shrines of the Crucified.

The religion of the Koran was very speedily established throughout Arabia. It carried its conquests into Syria, and its progress was only arrested by the death of the Prophet. Mohammed, also, achieved his success by no very gentle means. He inculcated the idea that his disciples were to employ the sword in vindicating the claims of his religion. A paradise of sensual pleasures, and the fellowship of angelic heroes were promised to all who should be victorious in the cause of God and his Prophet. Such were the means and instruments whereby the Arabian Chief made the conquest of his country, and produced the greatest revolution in human affairs that has occurred since the beginning of the Christian era. But he violated the principles of justice, and trampled on the rights of human nature. Liberty of conscience was granted to the Jew and the Christian only on the condition that they would pay for it, while for idolaters there was no alternative but conversion or the sword. When the Prophet, after being exiled for seven years, returned to his native city, three hundred and fifty idols which defiled its famous Pantheon were cast down and broken in pieces, while their worshippers only escaped destruction by a timely conversion.

The means whereby the Roman Emperor and the Arabian Prophet achieved their conquests were not essentially dissimilar. The divinely beautiful spirit of Jesus was crucified in the very midst of the outward triumphs of Christianity. Constantine was neither a greater nor a better man than Mohammed. If the strong hand of the Arabian iconoclast rudely demolished the idols in the famous kaaba, it was that he might suppress the idolatrous worship of his people, and

make Mecca the holy city of the Moslem.* It was probably from motives of piety rather than policy that the Prophet established the rite and enforced the obligation of pilgrimage. The ambition of the Roman Emperor was perhaps more selfish, while it was scarcely more consonant with the precepts of Jesus than that of the Arab prince. The crowned Christian was not more conspicuous for fidelity to his own faith, nor was his authority more cheerfully acknowledged. The most powerful monarchies in the world witnessed the progress of Mohammed with extreme apprehension, and the influence of the religion of the Koran was felt in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The Prophet professed to have entered the heavens, and to have intercourse with exalted spirits. It is true that in every circumstance of trial and danger he inspired his followers with the greatest enthusiasm by promising them the assistance of Gabriel, and by his descriptions of the angelic hosts which peopled all the air, and stood by his followers to nerve their arms in battle, or to bear those who might fall in his service to the enchanted realm of immortal forms of beauty and pleasures for ever new. The last hours of the Arab Chief were poisoned by the memory of unrighteous deeds; but no believer in the Christian religion was ever more truly penitent. When at last he stood face to face with death he

* "Had it not been for Mohammed, the East, at this moment, in all probability, would have been wholly given up to idolatrous practices. His mission prevented this, and established an absolute theological idea which would otherwise have found no political home on the face of the globe."—*Divine Drama of History and Civilization*, p. 259.

directed his disciples to support him in the Mosque while he celebrated the praise of God. Reviewing the record of his life, he said : " If any one complaineth that I have stricken him unjustly, lo ! here is my back ; let him return the blows. If I have injured the reputation of anyone, let him treat me in the same manner. If I have taken money from any one, I am here ready to restore it." No Christian prince ever exhibited deeper humility or more sincere repentance. Thus died the Prophet of Allah, and his last words were a prayer for the pardon of his sins.

The spirit that animates the soldier, and the nature of the weapons employed in his warfare, must determine the moral character of the contest and of the chief actors in the drama of human history. Tried by this standard, what preëminence has the historical Christianity over Islamism ? If we go to the battle-field at the suggestion of an unworthy ambition, we had better follow the standard of the Infidel, or any other image sacred or profane, than presume to unfurl the ensign of the Cross. Christians deny and defame their acknowledged Master when they put away his spirit ; they renounce his religion as often as they violate his plainest precepts, and they crucify him whenever they thus dishonor the symbols of his faith and worship. The crucifixion, in the most vital sense, should not be regarded as a solitary event in ecclesiastical annals. It is rather a fact of universal observation and constant repetition. Christians have never ceased to pervert the pure faith and spiritual worship of their illustrious Teacher. The lessons of the manger, the mountain, and the cross, were peace on earth, forgiveness of offenders, and good will toward

all men. But the vision of the sacred symbol in the heavens at noonday did not make a peaceful conqueror of the Christian Emperor. The heavenly mandate did not stay the sword. In such an example there was no spiritual health, but a mortal contagion. Authentic history demonstrates the fact. Others followed fast in his bloody footsteps. A war of two hundred years was inaugurated in the eleventh century by the enthusiasts instigated by Peter the Hermit. They fought desperately for the Holy Sepulcher, and they used such profane weapons as were employed by the infidel Saracens.

In the twelfth century St. Dominic and Pope Innocent III., professed followers of Jesus, and ministers of his religion, organized in Spain, for the trial and destruction of heretics, a bloody tribunal, with whips, dungeons, wheels, racks, and all the infernal machinery of torture. Jesus was crucified anew, and put to an open shame in the person of every poor victim of the Inquisition. Hell is imminent in the hearts and lives of the men who thus contrive to exhaust the powers of invention in the arts of cruelty. Notwithstanding Ignatius Loyola took the prescribed vows of poverty, chastity, monastic obedience, and abject submission, the Jesuits became the wealthiest and most powerful religious order in the world. Politically and morally this so-called Society of Jesus (?) proved to be so utterly unscrupulous and oppressive, that its very name has become a synonym for cunning intrigue, systematic deception, and absolute despotism. What a prostitution of eminent learning and great opportunities! And what a desecration of a revered name!

The Church, established by the power of the sword and up-

held by a policy fatal to individual liberty, was at best a merely human institution. The remarkable gifts possessed by the primitive disciples were gradually withdrawn, and the spiritual element, which was the divine life in the Church, languished and nearly expired at its own altars. Gorgeous temples, consecrated and enriched by imperial authority and munificence, were its sepulchers. The crucifixion, in a most vital sense, occurred when the Christian religion was married to the temporal power. Then it was that its indwelling spirit departed. That spirit was known to be present by the mysterious powers which it conferred on all true believers. At length, when the manifestation of the spiritual presence was no more or but rarely witnessed, it was evident that the Power itself which bestowed such gifts had deserted the shrines which men had reared and profaned. Since that day the true spirit of the religion of the Nazarine has been in the tombs, and a great stone—the whole system of material theology and ritualistic worship—has barred the door of the sepulcher. The clergy resist every effort to roll the stone away. When the spirit which characterized the primitive Church has manifested a disposition to return with all its ancient gifts and divine energies, far more widely diffused, they have madly resisted its power, as if they would have the spiritual death of the Church eternal. To-day only a poor effigy of the Crucified looks out of the stained windows of temples which are but garnished crypts of the slain Jesus.

What has Christianity been since it was thus corrupted, but the religious form of popular materialism—an earthly institution holding fellowship with every great wrong which pride,

fashion, and avarice have contributed to establish, and depending on civil authority or the mailed arm for protection and the means of extending its empire? Christian propagandists have, it is true, carried the Bible into every heathen land, but they have also carried along with it alcohol, the sword, the gibbet, and all the vices of a corrupt civilization. The Church militant has countenanced polygamy, slavery, vindictive punishments and aggressive war, and lived in open and adulterous union with numerous forms of corruption and oppression. The autocrat still grasps the ensign of irresponsible power, and the same despotic hand holds the sword and the cross.

The Protestant Reformation, under the leadership of Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin, in the sixteenth century, was little more than a bold protest against the gross corruptions of the Church and most unscrupulous abuses of ecclesiastical power. These manifold evils were shamefully conspicuous in scandalous sales of indulgences, at low prices, by which the papal revenues were vastly increased, and in the cruel persecutions of heretics, whose lives were counted worthless by the recognized authorities of the Christian world. Nor were these evils all confined to the Church of Rome. They did not terminate with the advent of Luther, nor in the lifetime of his contemporaries. In a degree that is unpleasant to contemplate, they were transmitted by the scarlet woman of the Apocalypse, whose matrix gave form to the monstrous conception

“Of Calvinism—born from out the sea
Of the Dark Ages and their tyranny—
From whose womb all hideous shapes have birth,
Of dogma, creed, and mind-oppressing rite.”

The work of the reformers was incomplete. They rendered

an important service to mankind in their day, and we honor them ; but the Church is not yet freed from the corruptions of those Mediæval Ages. The ordinary moral disinfectants have no power to cleanse its record. It is not made white, in fact, by the blood of the Lamb, and at last it must be "purified by fire."

I emphasize the statement that *the Reformation is not finished*. On the contrary, its deeper meaning is just beginning to be apprehended. In our time it is something far more significant than a resolute protest against the corruptions of the prevailing religion and the arbitrary *dogmata* of ecclesiastical councils. It is not in the highest sense a rude conflict with hoary errors and gigantic wrongs ; it is not a mere tilt with the agents of despotic authority. It takes form in a new psychological science and more profound philosophy of human nature, covering the entire realm of our relations to all things visible and invisible. The Battle-Ground of this Spiritual Reformation is not limited by geographical and national boundaries. It does not stop at the lines which separate the races of men, and is not confined to the large area of modern civilization. It is a silent but irresistible power in the Church and the world. It humbles the proud and exalts the lowly ; it strengthens the weak and rebukes the unworthy ; it defies the Pope and his cardinals ; the schools of science are dumb with astonishment ; it oversteps all real and imaginary limitations, and promises to make the conquest of the world.

The Spiritual Reformation is not now especially indebted to earthly agents and human coöperation for its rapid progress in our time and its present commanding influence. An invis-

ible and spiritual power—operating far and wide among the forms of the material universe—reveals itself in the diversified and startling physical and mental phenomena which have of late confounded the science and skepticism of the world. A mysterious power—everywhere bearing the stamp of human intelligence—immensely superior to the force of gravitation and the laws of molecular attraction and chemical affinity, is revealed among the subtle forces and ponderable elements of Nature. Inanimate objects are seemingly endowed with the powers of life, sensation, and volition. The ignorant astonish the wise by speaking in unknown tongues, and by revealing the secrets of Nature and the human mind. The masters of Art, who left their carved memorials and pictured thoughts for our contemplation, come back to inspire the souls of the living, and to guide the hands of those who shall yet fashion immortal creations. A new fire kindles in the eye and burns on the lips of the orator; sweet voices speak out of the depths in the solemn night, and divine instruction comes with the rays of the morning. “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.” The strings of the lyre are now swept by invisible fingers to notes of inspiration; the heavenly harmonies descend into the poet’s brain as soft perfumes, and gentle sounds steal along the avenues of sense; they take form and clothe themselves in the cerebral chambers, and great thoughts issue in harmonic numbers to charm the listening nations.

A cause that is rendered all-powerful by such means; the Reformation that derives the chief elements of its existence and its progress from unseen sources of fathomless ability—

the movement which in one-third of a century has attracted the attention of the whole civilized world—will not be likely to require the assistance of either legislation, fashion, or even mammon to secure its future triumph. The springs of its immortal life and the eternal laws of its development all have their archetypal forms in the Heavens. Such a cause needs no carnal weapons for its defense. The world is welcome to its arms and the heroes it so blindly worships. The warrior shall carry his scarred helm and glittering spear with him to the scene of his last repose; the gold-worshiper may build his gilded cenotaph, and crown and scepter rust and decay in common earth with the regal arm and the kingly brow. It is fit that the sepulcher of unsanctified ambition should inclose its weapons and its trophies. Spiritualism accepts no aid from these, for by the powers that reside in heavenly places it is triumphant and immortal.

As multitudes were still ignorant of the real facts of Spiritualism, while comparatively few had any clear comprehension of its profound philosophy, it was proposed, in the year 1879, to employ the secular press of the United States for the purpose of such a statement of its facts and illustration of its principles as might be necessary to correct the popular misconception of its character, and to properly vindicate its claims before the world. No one who supported the movement ever thought of discounting the proper claims of our spiritual papers, or of suspending the free use of any other means previously employed for the wide diffusion of spiritual knowledge. No friend of the measure ever conceived the crazy idea of imposing the slightest restraint upon the individual freedom

of the humblest disciple of the truth ; or of otherwise interfering with the peculiar views, personal prerogatives, or any conceivable interest of a single human being. Of course, it was not anticipated that the proposal to thus utilize the newspaper press of the country in the elucidation of the accepted facts and general principles of Spiritualism would meet with the slightest opposition from a single professed friend of the truth. Indeed, the nature of the case seemed to preclude the possibility of any determined resistance of such a measure. Only those who favored the plan were called upon to furnish the necessary means for its execution. No one else ever did or was expected to subscribe to the fund. Yet, strange to say, before the author had fairly entered upon his labors as the Editor-at-Large, an unfriendly feeling was engendered, by the conjunction of what adverse influences we will not attempt to explain. Indeed, the writer was never able to discover any rational cause for the opposition ; nevertheless a portion of the spiritualistic press of the United States both felt and manifested a bitter hostility to the enterprise, as will plainly appear from a perusal of the Appendix to this volume.

A few of the scribes thought they saw in the SECULAR PRESS BUREAU an engine of fathomless mischief, and they did what they could to make others see it in the same lurid light. To the observation of certain spiritual journals, whose apprehensions were perhaps the natural offspring of conscious weakness, the Editor-at-Large appeared to be a journalistic autocrat in his sanctum, surrounded by unscrupulous confederates, whose principal object was a censorship of the whole spiritual press of the country. No figment of the disordered

imagination was too absurd to find a place in the brains of certain spiritualistic "cranks." They saw the Bureau in various aspects according to their several proclivities, all of which seemed to such observers to be pregnant with only evil. Viewed from the meridian of Chicago, it was apparently an "eleemosynary device" to make a certain old spiritual mendicant undeservedly rich on some twelve hundred a year. In other words, ignoring the fact of any concurrent service to be rendered, it was presumed to be the intention of those engaged in the "scheme," to pension at least one superannuated pioneer, at the expense of a long-suffering spiritual people, and, at the same time—by means of a popular subscription—to furnish free a regular contributor to the *Banner of Light*. This "eleemosynary scheme"—as observed from the "City of Brotherly Love," through the murky atmosphere of the spiritual pandemonium—was Satan's own embodiment of all the elements of cunning deception, hypocrisy, and jesuitical despotism. At the same time, in a poetic observation of the "scheme"—as seen from the Cincinnati spiritual observatory by a dramatic art interpreter of the Bard of Avon, through his pair of judicial spectacles—the Bureau was discovered to be the box of Pandora, with such improvements as modern discovery has contributed to the arts of infernal mischief.

Some of our people were tired of empty words and hollow pretensions to an interest in the cause, and many more were heartily sick of personal and aimless disputations in our own ranks; and they felt that they might very properly engage in some *practical work*, without giving offense to any one, and with a view to a much wider diffusion of spiritual knowledge

among the people. It did not occur to the earnest and liberal friends of the movement, that we had any petty dictators in this free country whom they must first consult and conciliate, before daring to support a measure of such public importance as the subsidiary employment of the secular press in the interest of Spiritualism. Accordingly, they went about their own business in no ostentatious manner, but in a quiet, rational way; regardless alike of personal jealousies and the explosive passions of little souls who are accustomed to shout freedom until they are hoarse, and practice intolerance until they disgust the rest of mankind.

The true objects and manifest aims of the Editor-at-Large and his friends were grossly misrepresented, and many honest people led astray to a false conclusion. In the hope of disabusing the public mind, in the equal interest of truth and justice, and yet in the true spirit of conciliation, the author, at an early opportunity, prepared a friendly epistle, especially addressed to the Editor of the *Banner of Light*, and intended to disarm unreasoning suspicion and opposition. This circular letter merits a place in the Introduction to this Book. It will serve to illustrate the independent and liberal, yet unobtrusive spirit in which the good work of the SECULAR PRESS BUREAU was undertaken. It is not the fault of the author if it be found to involve a clearer revelation of the ungracious *animus* of those who could discern nothing but evil in the honest purpose and the earnest labors of its friends and supporters. Compared with the dogmatic and unreasoning spirit of the opposition, it will appear to involve a striking and vivid contrast.

THE LETTER TO MR. LUTHER COLBY.

PUBLISHED IN THE "BANNER OF LIGHT," FEB. 14, 1880.

In order to save valuable time, which must be faithfully devoted to more important public interests, I may here, once for all, respond briefly to the suggestions of several personal friends, private correspondents, and all others who would have me participate in personal controversies which at best are always unprofitable. Life is so short, and its duties and obligations of so sacred a nature, that we cannot for a moment entertain the idea of such a departure from the established habit of a lifetime. There are so many great questions which really concern the general and lasting interests of mankind, that any extended presentation of personal grievances would be out of place, and unbecoming the character of a spiritual reformer. The questions referred to demand so much serious thought and practical illustration, that we have neither time nor inclination to engage in any petty warfare which may have its origin in private interests and personal ambition. I have little disposition to censure the conduct of others, much less would I presume to pass judgment upon their motives. I cannot, however, conscientiously suspend my appropriate work to engage in unfriendly disputations, which seldom fail to generate acrimonious feeling and the bitterness which produces lasting alienation among those who should dwell together in unity and peace.

Should one come to us having a commission to throw dust in the eyes of the rest of mankind, we might very properly question the utility of his mission, and conclude that it might

be safe to abolish his office. If there are persons so employed who seem to love their occupation, we do not propose to act in the capacity of sharp detectives in bringing such people to the bar of retributive justice. Just how far they are morally responsible for their conduct we may never infallibly know. When a proper example fails to exercise a salutary restraint, we may leave them to run the length of their tether, and to measure the consequences of their folly by the line of a painful experience.

We are reminded that history has recorded the names and deeds of men who seem to have been born to illustrate the great diversities of human character, and the extreme possibilities of individual destinies. Jesus and Judas, George Washington and Benedict Arnold, performed their parts respectively in the world, and who shall say that such opposite characters were not necessary to the completeness of the divine drama of republican Liberty and Christian civilization? If one has an unpleasant and thankless part to perform, and his peculiar work inspires a feeling of displeasure and disgust in others, it may possibly be only a misfortune, for which he is deserving of commiseration. Let us, as far as possible, draw over all such the broad mantle of that charity which recognizes the rational limit to individual responsibility, while it mercifully sheathes the sword of Justice in a velvet wrapper.

No man, however commanding his talents and ambitious in his aims, may aspire to the office of sole manager in this great theater of human events. It is not our purpose to take up another man's *rôle*; to divide public attention by any superficial device or by-play with parties behind the scenes; nor

are we disposed to crowd the other actors off the stage by any real or imaginary skill in fencing. The supernumerary who performs his humble part with an honest purpose is entitled to receive our right hand of fellowship. Personally, we only demand space for earnest action and the measure of freedom which is our birthright. But we cannot be expected to ask permission to play our own part in this performance. There is no spiritual hierarchy to determine what we may or may not do in the exercise of our personal right to labor in the common vineyard. Happily, in the absence of such an institution, the individual may be wisely allowed to pursue his own course, and in the performance of his work to hold in supreme respect the sober dictates of reason and conscience.

We have strong desires, an earnest purpose, and modest expectations. All we imperatively demand is necessary room for some healthful exercise, liberty to do our work in our own way, and to accept of such aid as may be freely given. For these privileges we shall of course offer no supplication. The American type of manhood does not descend so low. If it is proper to render thanks on this occasion, let the offering be made to the Father of our spirits, and the fathers of the Republic, from whom we derived the priceless inheritance of civil and religious liberty. Most men who have labored long for the defense of unpopular truths, and in the interest of universal humanity, have had various restraints imposed upon them, and many obstacles thrown in their way. Something of this kind has been, and may still continue to be, an element in our personal experience; and yet it is worthy of observation that the avowed enemies of Spiritualism have neither disputed

our natural right to find our place under the laws of mental and moral gravitation, nor the propriety of performing our legitimate work after the manner of our choice. The despotic assumption of this high prerogative was left to certain professed Spiritualists, whose chronic dissatisfaction in respect to our course seems incurable. On the whole, we have, perhaps, been fortunate in our experience, since other men may have rendered better service and fared worse at the hands of the evil spirits of jealousy and personal ambition. We know that many worthy men have been tempted by worldly considerations, and otherwise sorely tried to test their devotion to truth and righteous living, and withal to place the fair record of their fidelity beyond dispute. St. Paul was not the only spiritual reformer who may have discovered "a thorn in his flesh, the messenger of an adversary to buffet him." (II. Cor. XII. 7.)

In entering upon the work assigned me, I have not consciously given offence to any man. While I have never solicited the special fellowship of any clique or party, I have ever desired to preserve the most cordial and fraternal relations with all men, especially with those who belong to the household of a living faith and the modern Gospel. *I accept no authority but Truth fitly expressed; I would wield no influence but that which necessarily accompanies its proclamation. I am not here to dogmatize on any subject; I do not propose to meddle with any other man's affairs; I will not limit his independence of mind by doing his thinking for him; nor do I contemplate the smallest supervision of the work of the spiritual press, beyond the reading of the papers and the right of private judgment of the character and value of their contents.* My labors will be performed in

another and a broader field. In bearing the white flag of a rational Spiritualism into the camp of its enemies, I am happy to know that I cannot possibly get in the way of those who may not be pleased to accompany the expedition.

Every day brings me new evidence that the work undertaken is positively demanded by the exigency of the times. Papers are being forwarded from every quarter of the country, with marked articles which the Editor-at-Large is expected to review in the interest of truth and as necessary vindications of its friends. I am also in receipt of letters from eminent persons in England and France, assuring me that they regard the proposed work as of the greatest practical importance. If the determined efforts of the spirits, the earnest coöperation of the *Banner of Light*, and the present contributors to the Fund are properly sustained by others, we shall doubtless be able to present some rational views of Spiritualism to at least a million of people before the termination of the present year—people who never read our papers, and before whom the only exhibitions of the subject hitherto may have consisted of the basest caricatures.

Let personal and acrimonious disputations cease forever. Among those who recognize one divine Father of all, and all men as one common Brotherhood, such controversies are manifestly out of place. Let us give our attention to essential principles, to spiritual ideas, and to practical measures. For the honor of a great cause, which has been so long defamed abroad and much abused at home, let us give more time to devout meditation and earnest work. S. B. B.

80 West Eleventh street, New York, February 9, 1880.

One might have supposed that such a statement of reasons for choosing to quietly pursue our work—without stopping to reply to those who not only assailed the Bureau, but attributed most unworthy motives to the Editor-at-Large and the principal supporters of his work—might have been sufficient to disarm opposition. But the malcontents were not to be appeased ; and for two years we pursued our peaceful labors—in the interest of the common cause—under the running fire of an enemy bearing a white flag and claiming shelter in the very citadel of the Spiritual Revolution. How far the hostile spirit of detraction and animadversion may find any possible justification or excuse in the facts and circumstances of the case, is a question which is confidently left to the candid judgment of all who may faithfully peruse the following pages.

It was more especially during the first year of its existence that the opposition to the Bureau displayed the least reason and the greatest intensity. In the bitterness of their hostility its enemies did not hesitate to publicly defame the more prominent persons engaged in the work, and always without the slightest cause or provocation. For the credit of the common humanity let the fact be plainly stated that this peculiar class was never numerous, though often offensively obtrusive and noisy. Perhaps in the course they resolved to pursue they saw the main chance of gaining distinction in this world. We know that some noble natures are rendered memorable by their *helpfulness of their fellow-men*, and for important services in the interest of truth, justice and humanity ; while others only escape oblivion, achieving an unenviable immortality, by reason of their offenses. It is not the province of the writer to de-

termine the *motives* of those misguided persons who placed what obstacles they could in our path, and also in the way of many enlightened men and women who have been engaged in this conscientious effort to disseminate the truth. So much—it has seemed to the author—justice to all parties imperatively demands.

We lament the existence in our midst of an unlovely spirit, which so blinds the mind and blunts the moral sensibilities, that the impoverished soul no longer finds it convenient to attribute worthy and honorable motives to his fellow-men. It certainly was not expected that the labors of any one connected with the movement would be attributed to a mercenary spirit. How have we been enriched while in this service? Certainly not in any way that has a relation to our worldly fortunes, humble and uncertain as these may have been in the past. Those accustomed to estimate the value of skilled labor will be slow to discover any worldly speculation, and they will be able to judge how far the writer can have become affluent in circumstances and luxurious in his manner of living, from the small fund of the Secular Press Bureau.

Let us here inquire what private aim or selfish purpose can the proprietors of the BANNER have promoted by their earnest and constant devotion to this work? They contributed all necessary space for a complete exposition of the objects and claims of the Bureau; they devoted much valuable time to this service; they also performed the duties of treasurers; kept the accounts and published a current record of the subscriptions received, and for all these services they never made the smallest charge. Nor is this all. From the beginning, Luther

Colby and Isaac B. Rich were among the generous contributors to the fund. And yet they never so much as once intimated that they would even accept the smallest return of any description for any service they ever rendered. The facts in the case utterly preclude the possible intrusion of any selfish consideration as an incentive to action. The rôle of Luther Colby in this performance should forever shield his name and memory against even the most distant intimation of interested motives.

Our experience has demonstrated that there is but one way to reach the multitudes who make war upon Spiritualism : *It is to be done alone by an intelligent propagandism conducted through the mediumship of the press of the country.* By this means the clouds which envelop the common mind, and thus mislead the judgment, may be most effectually dissipated. *Precisely where the darkness exists, the light must be permitted to shine.* In a most comprehensive sense, the secular press is the lever with which the world may be moved. We only require a place to stand, and a solid fulcrum, in the form of material support. Our limited experience has satisfied us that the plan for using the newspaper and literary press, as the medium for the dissemination of the most important facts, principles, and ideas, and for the wide diffusion of all spiritual knowledge, is altogether feasible. The accomplishment of this purpose is no longer a problem of doubtful solution. That industry and liberality combined will insure complete success, is a fact sufficiently demonstrated to furnish a rational basis for the public faith. It is only necessary to place the requisite means at the disposal of the Bureau, as now constituted, and a wide,

powerful, and most beneficent influence may be exerted among the millions who seldom or never read a spiritual paper.*

We entertain the hope that the work which has proved successful on a small scale, may be greatly enlarged in the future. What we most need—and may readily have, if the people are so disposed—is a *complete working Bureau of Correspondence, with the necessary Assistants, and such facilities for extensive work as would enable us to occupy more or less space in all important journals in every part of the country.* Indeed, this work can be made as extensive as the people will, and need only be limited by the means employed in its prosecution. When we are reminded that these papers are numbered by thousands; that some of them print from one to two hundred thousand copies of each succeeding issue; and that their aggregate circulation may be fitly symbolized by the leaves of the forest, the rational Spiritualist must perceive that here is the great engine of power whereby we may—if so determined—reach, inspire, move, and illuminate the universal mind.

* Our limited space will not permit of the multiplication of examples illustrative of the influence of the Secular Press Correspondence, but a single fact may be more satisfactory than a long argument. The author had occasion to address a letter to the Editor of an influential paper in the British Provinces. Before it was otherwise ascertained that it had been published, we received a most earnest letter from Canada, in which the writer—a gentleman of intelligence and an entire stranger—stated in substance that he had read our correspondence in the Government Organ at Toronto; that it had inspired him with an intense desire to know more of a subject which, so far as he had been previously informed, was everywhere treated with unmeasured contempt and ridicule. Some time after we received a second letter from this gentleman, inclosing money for spiritual books, which were forwarded to his address, and he is now believed to be profoundly interested in the whole subject.

But while the importance of the enterprise and the acknowledged success of the experiment have been clearly demonstrated, it became necessary—at the close of the second year of service—to announce the fact that, for the present and the immediate future, we could no longer devote our time exclusively to the prosecution of this work. We have not abandoned the Bureau, which has been re-organized under the direction of the American Spiritualist Alliance, with the author as President. In following the lead of the Spirit World, supported by the friendly counsel and the material aid of many friends, and enforced by inclination and judgment, the writer earnestly engaged in the work at the beginning, hoping to be useful in such public capacity, at the same time having little regard to personal considerations and private interests. The undersigned would still be devoting his time mainly to the same service, but a voice too solemn and imperative to be disregarded called him to another field of labor. That voice is mild and persuasive, but its speech is significant and impressive. From within the veil it speaks out audibly, and I here report some of its words :

“ In the gray twilight of the early morning, a sower went out to sow, and we were with him in his labors. The seed scattered broadcast germinated, and has now taken root all over the earth. Warmed by the vital heat of spiritual influence, all

‘ Nature multiplies her fertile growth.’

To-day the fields prophesy of the harvest that is near. Their ripening treasures, waving in the spiritual sunlight, are beautiful to look upon. We come now, in the afternoon of this golden autumn, to admonish you to *bind up your sheaves*, before the night cometh when your day’s work in this field will be done.”

The import of this somewhat figurative language may be so apparent already as to require no further elucidation. The spirits have given a revelation of their intelligence, and also of their power to produce results within the sphere of our practical affairs, by making our acquiescence even possible in the nature of things. The reader will, perhaps, have inferred that the particular work the writer is expected to perform is *the preparation of several volumes for the press*, the first of which is here submitted to the public. How long we may be so employed it is quite impossible to conjecture. The extent of the work may very much depend on the writer's physical health, and on other matters, of which we can now have, at best, only a dim and uncertain perception in coming events and circumstances which already forecast their shadows on the prescient mind.

While the revelations of To-day are to thousands the source of new hope and undying consolation, it is not denied that, in some instances, they may awaken unpleasant apprehensions. Spiritualism often excuses the mistakes and weaknesses of poor humanity, but it offers no concealment for the enthroned errors and consecrated wrongs of the world. With unsparing hand it strikes off the mask from the face of the hypocrite and rends the mantle of the self-righteous Pharisee. In its mysterious light and before its unearthly vision the darkest secrets of the mind and heart may be disclosed. Men and women of depraved habits may tremble when the subject is mentioned, fearing that their deeds of darkness may be comprehended in its revelations, but the just have nothing to fear. The pure in heart love to recline by the fountains of its inspiration ; in-

nocent maidens and little children slumber while its oracles speak, and waking apprehend no evil.

We cannot attempt to explain all the mental perturbation witnessed among men. Precisely how certain minds are unhinged we may not infallibly know. It may be by the memory of unworthy deeds, or by impressions derived from a false education. The loss of the mental equipoise may be owing to the magnitude and weight of a dominant idea, or otherwise result from extreme nervous susceptibility and intense cerebral excitement. How many have gone mad from a too intense and constant application to business? How many have forever lost their balance in the depths of their religious devotions? And how many more, alas, from "loving not wisely but too well?" Let those who condemn Spiritualism because a few persons have been temporarily deranged, whether in body, mind, or morals, think of the fearful sacrifices which attended the great religious movements of past ages. It is preposterous to denounce the present revolution in the world's faith, and yet profess to venerate the names and deeds recorded in sacred history. Moses, Joshua, and David, Constantine, Peter the Hermit, and Simon de Montfort, offered whole hecatombs of human victims on the altars of their religion; while the mortal remains of two millions fertilized the battle-fields of the Crusaders!

But Spiritualism, as taught in the first and the nineteenth centuries, abhors the bloody sacrifice! It requires its faithful disciples to leave the polluted shrines and "worship the Father in spirit and in truth." In the light of a rational Spiritualism, the laws of Nature are the oracles of God; each

form of beauty and use is a revelation ; every curious process is a sermon ; the enlightened spirit is the temple and altar of the Divine ; a sincere aspiration or grateful emotion is a devout prayer, a true prophecy or a solemn psalm, and all charitable deeds are appropriate benedictions. The enlightened and true friends of this reverent and rational Spiritualism hope and trust that it will gloriously triumph by loving words, inspired thoughts, and Godlike deeds, and that its white banner—already unfurled in the golden morning of Freedom and Immortality—may yet become the ensign of the World !

THE AUTHOR.

1 SHERMAN AVENUE,
NEWARK, N. J., *June 28, 1882.*

CONTENTS.

THE POETS AND THE SPIRITS.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE INSPIRATIONS OF GENIUS.

FROM THE HARTFORD (CONN.) DAILY TIMES.

	PAGE
Relations of the Human Mind to the Spirit-World—The Inspirations of Genius—The Spiritual Element in Poetry—Illustrative Examples—Virgil and the Æneid—Shakespeare's Recognition of the Spirits—Milton on the Heavenly Messengers—Testimony of Dr. Samuel Johnson—Coleridge and Christabel—Shelley and Adonais—Wordsworth on Spiritual Insight—Campbell on Prophetic Visions—The Cloud of Immortal Witnesses—The Spirits in Bailey's Festus—Irving's "Midnight Musings" on Spiritualism—Conclusion.....	3

RELIGION OF FAITH AND FASHION.

REV. DR. JOHN HALL AND THE LOGIC OF THE PULPIT.

FROM TRUTH, JANUARY 20, 1880.

Millions in one Christian Temple—Sufferers from Cold, Hunger, and Nakedness in its Shadow—Who will save the Neglected Ones?—The Doctor discourses on "Faith and Science"—A Theologian answers Huxley—Who will answer the Cry of the Poor?—Does the Bible lead Modern Science?—Aromatic Airs and bad Logic at \$20,000 a Year—Relations of the Serpent to Popular Theology—Ireland's War on Snakes—St. Patrick slays the last in the Lake of Killarney—A Doctor of Divinity against Science and History—The Office of Science is to Formulate the Truth.....	18
---	----

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

WANDERING AND CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS.

FROM THE ROCHESTER (N. Y.) DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE, FEB. 22, 1880.

Rambler on Spiritualism—The Great Question of the Ages—Disputing the Evidence of the Senses—Assumed Premises and Illogical Reasoning—Illusions and Hallucinations—Sensorial Evidence the Bases of Science and Jurisprudence—Rambler Losing both Sense and Reason, Strikes at the Foundation—Important Facts in Illustration—Amazing Power of the Spirits—A Sudden Conversion—Cogent Appeal to the Understanding.....	23
--	----

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

REVIEW OF REV. JOSEPH COOK'S LECTURES.

FROM THE BOSTON HERALD, FEB. 28, 1880.

	PAGE
The Religion of Jesus rests on Spiritual Facts—What Spiritualism Comprehends—Author of the Monday Lectures not a Spiritual Man—Crude Classification of Spiritualists—Religion of the Future—Mr. Cook lost in the fog of Supernaturalism—Man belongs to the Natural Sphere—Another call for a Scientific Investigation—Scientists answer, but the Clergy do not hear—The Quality of Charity.....	34

THE SPIRITUAL CONTROVERSY.

A MODERN SAMSON PULLING AT THE PILLARS.

FROM THE CINCINNATI (OHIO) DAILY ENQUIRER, MARCH 22, 1880.

Independence of the Enquirer—Judge and Mrs. A. G. W. Carter—Hon. Nelson Cross—The Ex-President of Columbia University—Charmed Life of Spiritualism—Cicero on Divination—A Distinction without a Difference—Philological and Theological Exposition—Looking into the dead Past for Wisdom—More Syntax than Sense—Has Divinity lost the Power of Speech?—Fox Sisters, Professor Morse and the Scientists—Dr. Samson's Explanation of the Rappings—Explosive Discharges of Nerve Force!—Science and the <i>Experimentum Crucis</i> —The Doctor's Unphilosophical Classification—Demonstration versus Dogmatism—The Living Oracles are never Dumb.....	41
--	----

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

PROF. HENRY KIDDLE AND HIS CRITICS.

FROM THE NEW YORK DAILY TRIBUNE.

Following the Example of Judge Edmonds—Free Thought and Moral Courage—Resignation of the Superintendent of Schools Suggested—A Blow at Religious Liberty—Hypocrisy Strains at the Gnat—Gross Injustice of the Opposition—Mr. Kiddle Defends his Book—Experience Matures the Judgment—Views of the Ancient Philosophers—Important Ground of Argument—Necessary Imperfections of Mediumship—Intelligence Limited to the Measure of its Instruments—The Law of Universal Expression—Cavilers Wrangle while Philosophers Reason.....	51
--	----

OPPOSITION IN THE PROVINCES.

"STRIKE, BUT HEAR!"

FROM THE TORONTO (CANADA) MAIL, MARCH 29, 1880.

Freedom of Speech and an Honest Judgment—Sergeant Cox—Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S.—Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S.—Testimony of Eminent Authors and Distinguished Scientists—William Howitt—Professor Varley—W. Stainton Moses, M.A., of the University College, London—George Sexton, LL.D.—The German Professors—Fechner, Fichte, Zöllner, and Ulrici—	
---	--

	PAGE
Men who are Treated as Lunatics—The Jugglers and Counterfeiters—Misrepresentations of the Press—Spirit of an English Poet—The Horoscope of his Country—The Prophetic Problem—The Question of the Ages—Southey's Death on Earth and Birth in Spirit—Life—Highly Poetic Description—Conclusion	56

SCIENCE VERSUS DOGMATISM.

REVIEW OF PROF. WUNDT'S LETTER.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

Progress of Spiritualism in Germany— <i>Amour propre</i> of American Scientists—Prof. Wundt's Apprehensions—What Constitutes a Scientific Authority—Disqualified by his own Standard—Youmans on Scientific Ignorance—Where are the Magnets?—The Sleeve-gammon Hypothesis—Comparison of the Facts with the Law—Wundt Waging War on his Principles—Limits of the Leipzig Professor—Comprehensive Views of Nature—Supernaturalism a Solecism—Natural Laws never Suspended—Illustrations from Nature—Diversity of Forms and Phenomena—Foundations of Natural Science—The Everlasting Drift—Perpetual Change of Conditions—Law of the Rock, the Tree and the Fish—The Wild goose Higher Law—Voluntary Powers of Man—Power of Mind over Matter—Attitude of Spiritualism Misrepresented—Arrogance of Modern Scientists Rebuked—The Fields of Observation—The Psychology of the Future.....	65
---	----

THE SPIRITUAL AGITATION.

REV. JOSEPH COOK'S MONDAY LECTURES REVIEWED.

FROM THE BOSTON TRANSCRIPT, MARCH 12, 1880.

Prof. Edwin D. Mead—Rev. Joseph Cook's Lectures—Visions of a Church Minister—Mild Reproofs and Pious Lamentation—How Jesus Passed Through Closed Doors—An Angel's Autograph—Regenerating Tide of Spiritualism—Veneration of Sacred Relics—Prof. Austin Phelps, and Rev. Charles Beecher—Prof. W. Wundt, of Leipzig—Dr. Robert Hare as a Scientist—Lights of the American Association—Professors Agassiz, Mitchel and Rogers—Pierce, Davies and Winslow—Unworthy Conduct of the Scientific Association—An Eminent Professor of Natural Philosophy—Makes no Distinction Between Superstition and Spiritualism—In the Coils of a "Monstrous Hydra"—Shades of Hercules and St. Patrick—Beatification of Ignorance	80
---	----

THE TRIBUNE ON SPIRITUALISTS.

POLITICS, FASHION AND SPORTING AT THE FRONT.

WRITTEN FOR THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE.

Note from Mr. Whitelaw Reid—Vindication of Spiritualism Declined—Unwritten Law of the Press—Fashionable and Vicious Topics Preferred—Subjects which secure instant Attention—Angry Divinity and depraved Humanity—Spiritualism hospitable to New Ideas—It Rationalizes Philosophy and Spirit-

ualizes Religion—The Ghosts from Hades—Spiritual Light and Liberty—
Related as Cause and Effect—The Tree by the Crystal River—Where Spirit-
ualism most Prevails—Observations on the Old World—England, France and
Germany—Views of Heaven—Sensuous Conception of the New Jerusalem—
Materialists demand the Evidence of the Senses—Wrestling with an Angel.. 89

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

A CALIFORNIA JACK-WITH-A-LANTERN.

WRITTEN FOR THE ARGONAUT OF SAN FRANCISCO.

A Critic's Views of Science—Relations of Facts to Scientific Systems—Horology
and Instruments for Measuring Time—Mistaken Views of the *Argonaut*—
Friendly Criticism—Hypothesis of Fraud and Jugglery—Theory of Involun-
tary Cerebral Action—A Harvard Professor with the Spirits—Science on and
Dignity under the Table—An Epic Poem from the Spirits—Remarkable Im-
provisation—The Solar Harp—Doctrine of Chances Illustrated—Is Meteorol-
ogy a Science?—Comparison of Physical and Spiritual Phenomena—Facts in
Science which Centuries may not Repeat 98

MODERN SPIRITUALISM DEFENDED.

IS THE ADVANCE GOING BACKWARD?

FROM THE HULMEVILLE (PA.) DELAWARE VALLEY ADVANCE, AUG. 19, 1881.

"Little is the wisdom, when the flight
So runs against all reason."—*Shak.*

The War on Religious Freedom—Hulmeville proposes Limits—Striking at the
Protestant Reformation—Ignoring the Declaration of Independence—Science
opposed to Religious Despotism—The Throne and the Tribune—Case of
William Twining—Derangement and Death from Disease—From the Uni-
versity to Bedlam—How too much Love kills People—Shall we stop Loving?
—Religious Lunatics—Shall we turn Infidel?—Neshaminy Falls Mass-Meet-
ing—Christians die suddenly—Shall we suppress the Christian Religion?—
Black Sheep in the Fold—Bishop Onderdonk and the Episcopacy—Infallible
Signs of Dissolution—Where Carelessness is Crime 112

TRUTH AGAINST ITS ENEMIES.

ANSWER TO THE AUTHOR OF A SPIRITUALISTIC TRAGEDY.

WRITTEN FOR THE PHILADELPHIA SUNDAY PRESS AND MIRROR.

"Our castle's strength will laugh a siege to scorn."—*Shakespeare.*

Misrepresentations of the Press—Mr. Twining's Case again—Time-Serving
Patrons of Error—Vulgar Ignorance and Prejudice—Opposition to New
Ideas of Religion—Wise Sayings of a Spiritual Reformer—Death by Disease
no Tragedy—Assumed Responsibility of J. W. Colville—The Patriarch's
Ladder—Insanity and Orthodoxy—The Lunatic Demands a Vicarious Sacri-
fice—A real Tragedy in the Freeman Family—Critic's Opposition to Dancing
—Examples from Sacred History—David Beats the Scotch in his Lively Reel
—He Selects Another Man's Partner—Blunders in the Figure and Breaks

one of the Commandments—Customs of the Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans—Solomon Sanctions Dancing—Celebrating the Prodigal Son's Return—Shallow Views of the Press and Mirror—This Critic Rivals the Teutonic Nursery Legends—A Christian Strives with "Faithful Abraham"—He Wins the Bloody Championship—Infamous Appeal to the Authorities—Editor of the Press and Mirror Disloyal to the Constitution..... 121

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS CRITICS.

AN UNJUST CRITICISM OF MR. HENRY KIDDLE REVIEWED.

FROM THE GATE CITY, KEOKUK, IOWA.

The late Superintendent of Schools—A Critic's offensive Misrepresentations—Mr. Kiddle was never Crazy—He was not Removed—A most efficient Man Resigned an Important Place—The Question of Scholarship—An Editor's Distress about Syntax—The Untitled Journalist versus a Master of Arts—Men who are paid to write bad English—The Josh Billings School—How Charity is illustrated at Gate City..... 131

DEAD LETTER OF DOCTOR GRAVES.

MAGNETISM, CLAIRVOYANCE, AND DEMONISM.

FROM THE VAN BUREN (ARK.) PRESS, OCT. 16, 1880.

Dr. Graves Visits Charles Foster—Dr. Samuel Watson's Lectures—Moving of the Waters—Ithuriel and Zephon—Commission from Gabriel—Satan in Mischief—Arrested by the Heavenly Detectives—Resurrection at Memphis—Mistakes of the Spirits—Mr. Greeley's Chirography—Heterodox Spirits—What Dr. Graves does not Know—Mesmer at the Court of Louis XVI.—Professorship of Animal Magnetism at Berlin—Cuvier, Laplace, Humboldt, Coleridge, Dugald Stewart, and Galvani—Relations of Vital Magnetism to Psycho-physiology—Power of Will over Magnetic Sensitives—Limitations of the Wonder-working Agent—Clairvoyance Explained—Invisible Psychological Operators—Dr. Graves on "Demonism"—"Hark, from the Tombs!"—Demonology of the Ancient Greeks and Modern Spiritualists..... 136

THE DEATH PENALTY.

ARGUMENT FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF SOCIETY.

FROM THE DAILY TIMES, HARTFORD, CONN., OCT. 13, 1880.

The *Herald* and the Death Penalty—Criminal Code and the Law-making Power—The Dangerous Classes—Capital Punishment Unchristian—Is Moses our Law-giver?—Revenge is not Justice—Relations of the Individual to the State—Philosophy of Democratic Government—Assumed and Dangerous Prerogatives—The State has no Right to take Life—Law makes the Public a Cowardly Assassin—Logic of the Duello—The Homicide's Defense—Sacredness of Human Life—Society's False Plea of Self-preservation—Naked Fallacy Exposed—Same Moral Law Applies to the Citizen and the Republic—Solemn Mockery of a Religion of Love—Behold the Sacrilegious Incon-

	PAGE
gruities!—Praying for our Enemies in the Insulted Name of Jesus—Growing Hemp and Building Gibbets—The Sacrament and the Execution—Grim, Ghastly, and Terrible Spectacle!.....	147

MEETING THE ENEMY.

CHARGES OF THE TABERNACLE PASTOR EXAMINED.

FROM THE BROOKLYN (N. Y.) DAILY EAGLE, NOV. 21, 1880.

Boanerges of the Modern Pulpit—Nuptials in Paradise—Dr. Talmage on Monogamy—He Charges Spiritualists with Free Love—Unfortunate Choice of a Theme—Is the Old Testament Opposed to Polygamy?—Scriptural Illustrations—Household of the Hebrew Prince, Abraham—Sarah, Hagar, and Keturah—The Poet-Minstrel of Israel—Seventeen Wives and Concubines—Royal Harem of Solomon—Worshiping the Gods of his Mistresses—Divine Certificate of his Moral Health—Humble Imitators at Salt Lake—Seraglio on the Bosphorus—A Gospel Shepherd in the Shades of the Cyprians—What Spiritualism Demands—Subordination of the Animal Appetites and Passions—What and Where are the "Carriion Crows?"—Beauties of the Turkish Harem—A Clergyman Testifies that they are the Daughters of Christian Parents—Orthodoxy and the Penitentiary—Falling from Grace—Prison Standard of Faith and Morals—Loose Screws in the Social Platform—Attempts to Identify Free Love and Spiritualism—Unclean Birds of Modern Babylon—Fowls that came to Roost but found no Rest—Presbyterianism and the Oneida Community—Saints Bankrupt in Righteousness—Spiritualism, the Angel Standing in the Sun—Consecration of the Home Life by a Layman—A Modest Spiritualist the most Effective Preacher—John Howard Payne, Author of "Sweet Home".....	157
--	-----

PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION.

HARMONY OF FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE AND RELIGION.— THE ACTIVE FORCE IN THE MORAL WORLD.

FROM THE (NEWBURYPORT) MERRIMAC VALLEY VISITOR.

The Andover Professor on Spiritualism—The Spirits at Stratford—Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D.—Irreverent Handling of the Sacred Canon— <i>Fantoccini</i> by the Invisibles in the Wardrobe—Demons Suspected of Arson—Waiting for the <i>Savants</i> —Falling back on Demonology—Science in Despair and Theology Desperate—Where are the angels of Mercy?—Tartarean Jail Delivery—Power of Spirits over the Elements—Views of the Ancient Greeks—Testimony of Philosophers, Apostles, Pagan Historians and Christian Fathers—Truth about Demons—Visions of a Theological Professor—How he Views Modern Spiritualism—Disorderly Manifestations Among the Ancients—Significant Examples from the Scriptures—Lying under a Divine Commission—Unclean and Dumb Spirits—Swinish Affinities—Paul's Indictment of the Early Christians—Infidels at the Baptism and the Communion—Low Mediums of Sacred History—Contest between Science and Theology—Enlarging the Domain of Science—The Great Reformation.....	171
---	-----

ANOTHER WITNESS TO THE TRUTH.

DAYLIGHT APPARITION OF A DEPARTED SPIRIT.

FROM THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE OF FEBRUARY 6, 1881.

Vision of a Prominent Merchant—Sensation on Brooklyn Heights—An unexpected Visitor from the Spirit-World—A Son returns to his Father's House in Daylight—Acknowledged Integrity of the Witness—Value of his Testimony—Spiritual Facts and Sensorial Phantoms—Positive Recognition—Shall we See and not Believe?—Philosophy of Mental Phantasmagoria—Coming when not thought of by the Observer—The Apparition suddenly Vanishes—Not the result of Diseased Organic Action—Phenomenon irreconcilable with the Laws of Physics—The Fact due to Spiritual Presence and Agency—A Conviction that rests on Evidence of the Sense of Sight—A Christian Gentleman and shrewd Business Man—Truth regardless of Popularity.....	PAGE 194
--	-------------

THE WATCHMAN ON SPIRITUALISM.

FALLACY OF POPULAR OBJECTIONS EXPOSED.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, FEB. 12, 1881.

Theory of Jugglery Abandoned—New Testament Demonology—Conquest of the World by the Spirits—Looking at Truth Through a Cloud—Has God Resigned his Scepter?—False Views and Unreasonable Demands—Imperfection of all Human Instruments—A Stupid Devotion to what is Old—Blind Faith in Sacred Fictions—Closing the eyes to Present Facts—Reasoning with the Watchman—Will he Open his Shutters?	199
---	-----

SHAKING THE ANCIENT TOWERS.

“WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?”

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, MARCH 5, 1881.

A Baptist's View of the German Professors—A Watchman Blinded by Lightning—Important Admissions—Cold Comfort for the Enemy—Mushroom Speculations—Indignation of Saints—Policy of Priestcraft—Falling back on the Dark Ages—Hymn of the Battle—Verdict of Christian Investigators—Asleep on the Watch-Towers of Zion—Humiliation of the Church—Fox Lake Representative—Reign of the Arch-fiend—Superstition yields to Science—Symbol of long Suffering—Crown of our Rejoicing.....	207
--	-----

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS FOES ON TRIAL.

DR. BRITAN REVIEWS REV. DR. BOSTWICK HAWLEY.

FROM THE SARATOGA (N. Y.) EAGLE, FEB. 26, 1881.

Dr. Hawley on Spiritualism—Great Learning and Little Logic—Motion without Progress—The Doctor's Faith in Solomon—Opposition to Liberalism in Religion—Quoting from the <i>Apocastasis</i> —Airing the Greek and Latin Classics—Ancient Sibyls and Priestesses—Death of the Old—The Paid Mourners—Paganism and Christianity—Polytheism and Spiritualism—Plurality of Gods reduced to a Divinity of Three Persons—Truth the only Authority—Careful
--

	PAGE
Review of the Scripture Argument—The Signs do not follow the Clergy— Weighed and found Wanting—Spiritualism of the New Testament—Corre- spondence with the Spirit-World—One Hundred Thousand Letters Answered through one Medium—Heaven and Hell within Speaking Distance—Discus- sion between Abraham and Dives—Shall we insult the Angelic Visitors?— Blindness of Theological Dogmatism—Shameless and unnatural Cruelty— The Living taught to Dishonor their Immortal Kindred, Spurn their Loved Ones, and Defame the Angels of Mercy—Crisis in the History of the Church —The Sacrilege of the Priesthood.....	213

THE MYSTERY REVEALED.

A NEW CLERICAL RATTLE FOR JUVENILE MINDS.

FROM THE DAILY ADVERTISER, AUBURN, N. Y., MARCH 23, 1881.

The Last Theory of the Rappings—Original if not True—The Mystery Unveiled by a Presbyterian Minister—Excitement at Hydesville—What Burgess Knows about a Bedstead—The Cunning of the Foxes—Pilgrims at the Mecca of Spiritualism— <i>Exposé</i> of the Trick—A Divine Uncovers the Mystery of Iniquity—"The Most Gigantic Sell"—The Rickety Old Bedstead never Moved—Testimony of a Pious Witness—He says it "has Doubtless Returned to Dust"—In a more Vital Sense it still Lives—Like John Brown's Soul, the Spirit of that Bedstead "is Marching On"—The Rappings are all over the World—Burgess "Would not Disparage Spiritualism"—He only Offers "this Little Scrap of History"—Legend of the Seven Sleepers—The Last One Wakes from a Nightmare	237
---	-----

THE OPPOSITION IN BALTIMORE.

UNFRIENDLY ATTITUDE OF THE CHRISTIAN PULPIT.

WRITTEN FOR THE BALTIMORE AMERICAN.

Rev. Joel T. Rossiter on Spiritualism—The <i>Séance</i> at Endor—The Medium Vindicated—A Royal dead-head Investigator—Mistakes of the Preacher—A Divine treats Samuel coldly—He is not sure the Prophet put in an Appearance —Bold stand of Rev. Dr. Butler—How he Exorcised the Spirits—The Soul- less Body at Endor—Puppet-show at the Transfiguration—How the Lord is supposed to have deceived Jesus, Peter, James and John—The Platitudes of the Pulpit—Character of the Religious Opposition to Spiritualism—A Grave Divine quotes a Vulgar Jester.....	243
--	-----

THE WAY SPIRITUALISM IS EXPOSED.

HOW THEY PLAY THE FARCE IN DUBLIN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SHAUGHRAUN, IRELAND.

A Bogus Medium on the Rampage—The Pious Mountebanks—Serving the Lord and the Jugglers—The Farce of Exposure—Saints pay for the Exhibition— Mysterious personal Disappearance—The fine Art of Deception—How a Rogue pursued his Occupation—The Secret let out in Ireland—Fools practic- ing their Folly—Madmen rave while the Stars shine and Heaven is Serene— Lights on the Headlands of Time—An Angel standing in the Sun.....	255
---	-----

SPIRITUALISM AND THE GREEK CHURCH.

ANOTHER BOLD ASSAILANT SHIVERS HIS LANCE.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

Spiritual Phenomena, Subjective and Objective—The Seer of Stockholm—Rev. John Wesley—Father Bjerring and the <i>Oriental Church Magazine</i> —Modern Spiritualism—Battle with Materialism—Infidelity giving up the Ghost—The Masters of Modern Science and Philosophy—The Owens Discover their Immortality—Dr. Hare's Spiritoscope Leads to his Conversion—Prof. James J. Mapes, LL.D., Surrenders at discretion—English Scientists and German Philosophers—Hiding the Truth and Falsification of History—"The Evil Eye"—Fox Family Fictions by an unknown Writer—Is the Shade of Munchausen here?—The Tangled Web—Dr. Kane, the Arctic Explorer—His Affection for Margareta—Love Surrenders to Personal Ambition—Conclusion.	PAGE 260
---	-------------

JOURNALISTIC IGNORANCE ILLUSTRATED.

OPPOSITION OF THE NEW YORK DAILY TIMES.

FROM THE HARTFORD (CONN.) DAILY TIMES, SEPT. 8, 1881.

Justice and Liberality of the Hartford <i>Times</i> —The Moral Courage that respects the Truth—The New York <i>Times</i> —A Striking Contrast—An Expert without Experience—Dr. Beard as a Psychological Authority—Testimony of George Ripley and Horace Greeley—Hollow pretensions of Doctors Beard and Hammond—What they Discover was long since Known to Thousands—The <i>Times'</i> Ignorance of the History of Psycho-magnetic Phenomena—Blind Faith in its solitary Witness—A Metaphysical Question—Dogmatism of the New York <i>Times</i> —Analysis and Criticism of the Editor's Views—Illustrative Examples and Explanation of Principles—Disposition of Jugglery and the Jugglers—Sciolists Discounting the Claims of Eminent Scientists—Calling the wrong Witness—Testimony of Clairvoyance to the Truth of Spiritualism.....	273
---	-----

DECLINING THE RESPONSIBILITY.

IMMUNITY FOR OLD FALSEHOODS.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

Policy of the Newspaper Press—False Charge against Spiritualists—John A. Lansing's pious Speculation—"Devouring Widows' Houses"—Religious Fanatics with an Eye to Business—How Mrs. Upham was made a Victim—Fraud under the Cloak of Religion—Drawing the Papers in the Lord—Lunacy or Hypocrisy— <i>Ashbury Park Journal's</i> Testimony—A Fair Confederate—Mary at the Ocean Grove Meetings—Parties all Members of Orthodox Churches.....	285
---	-----

GREAT DARKNESS IN VERMONT.

AN EDITOR DEFENDS SATAN AND DEFAMES SPIRITUALISTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE "HERALD AND GLOBE," RUTLAND, VERMONT.

Spiritualists Dishonored and the Devil Defended—Important Concessions by

	PAGE
Prof. Phelps—Great Extremity of the Theologians—The <i>Congregationalist</i> as a City of Refuge—Poisoned Arrows from a Bomb-proof Retreat—Ignorance and Supernaturalism—Exploded by a Philosophical Explanation—Angels Imprisoned and Devils Emancipated—Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—Bold Assumptions and Rotten Logic—Evidence Worthless when the Witness knows nothing—Impatience and Intolerance—Real Facts Rejected and the true Witnesses Defamed—Power of the Spirits—Counterfeits are Evidence of Something Genuine—Theory of Jugglery—Hermann and Heller—Are only feeble natures Inspired?—Sick People of Biblical History—Modern Illustrations—Visit from the Author of the Raven—Experience of Death and Reception in the Spirit-World—Song of the Angel Lenore—A Spirit-Maiden's Song of Shelley—Coleridge Wakes the Chords of his Orphic Lyre.....	290

LATEST BIGELOW MANIFESTO.

SHADOWS UPON THE GREEN MOUNTAINS.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, BOSTON, MASS.

One-sided Freedom of Discussion—A practical Commentary on Justice—Will Hindostan send a Missionary to Rutland?—Editor Bigelow's <i>ex parte</i> Controversy—He Rejects our Reply and writes a Letter—He gives Illustrations in Rhetoric—Taking his Cue from Professor Phelps—Senses and their Functions—Thomas L. Harris and the English Bards—Distinguished Converts to Spiritualism—Bigelow on Nervous Exaltation—Shakespeare and Milton—Spirits in Hamlet and Macbeth—"Midsummer Night's Dream"—Bard of Avon on Spirits and Angels—Milton's Spiritual Drama—Michael and Gabriel—Obfuscation in the Sanctum—An Editor's habitual Craze—Fraud and De-lusion the Materialist's <i>Credenda</i> —Editorial Gasconade—Appeal to the Passions of the Populace—Midnight views of Journalistic Responsibility—Retiring under a Cloud.....	309
--	-----

SUPERFICIAL INVESTIGATION.

HOW SPIRITUALISM IS TREATED IN MINNEAPOLIS.

WRITTEN FOR THE MINNEAPOLIS (MINN.) EVENING JOURNAL.

A Man of Business Testifies—He Sees the Facts under Test Conditions—Deception said to be Impossible—Jumping at a Conclusion—Nature Preserves her Method—Men who Voice their Ignorance—Illustrations of Natural Law—Intellectual Juvenility—Jesus more Natural because Spiritual—The Investigator Theorizes—Hypothesis of a Distinct Order of Beings—Believing against Evidence—Ignorance and Dogmatism—Spirits as Educators and Physicians—Their Deeds of Charity—Saving the Life of Hon. N. P. Tallmadge—Bursting of Commodore Stockton's Gun—Reformed by a Spirit—Lives saved by Spirit-warnings—Emancipation Proclamation—Lincoln Inspired to Break the Chains of Slavery—Immortality Demonstrated—Powers of the Spirits—Laws of Spiritual Attraction—Baiting with Deception and Catching Lies—The Subject in its True Light—Waiting for Heavenly Interpreters of Spiritual Mysteries.....	325
---	-----

OUR SPIRITUAL GUESTS.

HOW THEY BECOME VISIBLE AND TANGIBLE.

BY S. B. BRITTAN.

	PAGE
Introductory Observations—Order of Natural Development Illustrated—The Noblest Work Unfinished—The Spirit Visitors of All Ages—Absolute Reality of the Phenomena—Citation of Facts—Testimony of History and Experience—Startling Illustrations—Ben Jonson Entertains his Guests—Séance of the "Miracle Circle"—Zalphi, the Greek Girl—A Being of Unearthly Beauty—A Retired Merchant Announces his own Death—Classification of the Phenomena—Opening the Interior Avenues of Sensation—Psychological Pictures—Spiritual Transfigurations—The Question of Materialization—Philosophical Exposition—Critical Review of the Facts—Extremes of Skepticism and Credulity—How Spirits Operate on our Senses—Illustrations from Cicero and Virgil—Weighing a Spirit in Vermont—How the Indian Maid may Turn the Scale—A Conundrum for the Philosophers—One Law governs all Corporeal Bodies—Apparitions of the Living Explained—Superstition retires to Congenial Night—Daylight Comes with Spiritual Science—Affiliation of Congenial Souls.....	339

THE MATERIALIZATION QUESTION.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JULY 3, 1880..... 379

APPENDIX A.

REPLY TO HON. THOMAS R. HAZARD.

REVIEW OF THE CRITICS AND THE SITUATION.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JULY 10, 1880..... 383

REJOINDER TO THOMAS R. HAZARD.

OUR FINAL ANSWER TO OUR REVIEWER.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, OCT. 16, 1880..... 390

APPENDIX B.

THE WESTERN SPIRITUAL PRESS..... 410

APPENDIX C.

PLEADING TO THE INDICTMENT.

FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, MAY 29, 1880..... 424

THE GRAND ARMY OF STRAW!

MY ANSWER TO HUDSON TUTTLE 430

THE OFFERED EXPLANATION.

A POET CLAIMS HIS LICENSE IN HIS LOGIC.	PAGE
MY ANSWER TO J. O. BARRETT.....	436

APPENDIX D.

BEFORE THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

EDITOR-AT-LARGE WORK UNDER DISCUSSION.	
FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JAN. 8, 1881.....	440

DR. BRITTAN'S ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN NEW YORK, 1881.	
CLAIMS OF THE SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.....	444

APPENDIX E.

OPINIONS OF DISTINGUISHED SPIRITUALISTS....	453
---	-----

VOICES OF THE PEOPLE.

POPULAR ESTIMATE OF THE SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.....	466
---	-----

VIEWS OF THE PRESS.

DR. BRITTAN AND THE "TIMES.".....	477
-----------------------------------	-----

APPENDIX F.

VOICES FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD.

THE PRESS AND THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE.....	488
--	-----

APPENDIX G.

FRATERNAL SALUTATION.

TO LUTHER COLBY, NESTOR OF THE SPIRITUAL PRESS.....	499
---	-----

THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE FUND.....	502
-------------------------------	-----

BATTLE-GROUND

OF THE

SPIRITUAL REFORMATION.

THE POETS AND THE SPIRITS.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE INSPIRATIONS OF GENIUS.

FROM THE HARTFORD (CONN.) DAILY TIMES.

Relations of the Human Mind to the Spirit-World—The Inspirations of Genius—The Spiritual Element in Poetry—Illustrative Examples—Virgil and the *Æneid*—Shakespeare's Recognition of the Spirits—Milton on the Heavenly Messengers—Testimony of Dr. Samuel Johnson—Coleridge and Christabel—Shelley and Adonais—Wordsworth on Spiritual Insight—Campbell on Prophetic Visions—The Cloud of Immortal Witnesses—The Spirits in Bailey's *Festus*—Irving's "Midnight Musings" on Spiritualism—Conclusion.

'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man. —Addison.

To the Editor of the Daily Times :

THE ordinary or more familiar operations of the human mind are generally accepted as the measure and standard of its normal activity and capacity. Accordingly, whenever the faculties exhibit unusual intensity and power, or are exercised on subjects which far transcend the range of popular thought, even the noblest efforts are liable to be regarded as abnormal eccentricities. It was long since proved—if the vote of the majority can settle a question of this nature—that the multitudes who occupy the plane of the common mind are preëminently *compos mentis*. Having no decided mental and moral qualities to distinguish them one from another, they conclude that they are free from angularities, and are most symmetrically developed. Being self-constituted judges of others, as well as of themselves, they assume the right to

decide who is crazy and who is devilish. They seldom or never question the senses nor the judgment of those who are free from new ideas ; but the man who dreamed last night of the next grand discovery, whether it be a new continent, another planet, or an additional motive power, is treated as a visionary this morning, though the day may realize all that his dream foreshadowed.

The world regards its own with especial favor. In every age the man who has approved the existing government, however oppressive ; who has served the established religion, however corrupt ; and defended the prevailing philosophies and customs, however superficial and absurd, has been the accredited example of human consistency, and perhaps the oracle of the people. The most devout worshiper in the temple of Art ; the wisest philosopher of his time ; the founders of new sciences and the advocates of the latest and noblest reforms, are often treated as mere enthusiasts, and accused at once of profaning the altars of the living and dishonoring the memory of the dead. Men of sense are weary of the repetition of this solemn, senseless farce ; but it furnishes knaves with congenial employment and fools with agreeable entertainment, and so the play goes on. The inspired teachers of every age and nation—in whose souls the thoughts of archetypal worlds and the revolutions of earth and time are born—have been derided and condemned ; and yet the thoughtless world, in its rude and sensual delirium, scourges, incarcerates, and crucifies its benefactors and its saviors !

The idea appears to be widely entertained that the world is chiefly indebted to a diseased action of the human mind for

the results which have contributed most essentially to its own illumination and the advancement of modern civilization. The proudest monuments of art ; the discoveries in physical science ; and the progress in moral, metaphysical and spiritual philosophy ; no less than the airy visions and ideal conceptions of the poet, have been the legitimate offspring of those who were denominated dreamers—until the great thoughts which eluded the grasp of cotemporaneous millions were simplified and systematized for the instruction of the common mind. Those who give birth to original ideas are often anathematized, while those who subsequently determine their practical application in material forms of use are honored as the benefactors of mankind. The world is alike unjust in its judgment and blind in its idolatry. The miserable hypothesis by which a scientific materialism attempts to solve the problem before us lies in our way, but it may be speedily dissected and removed. It is conjectured that a morbid irritability of certain portions of the brain occasions great functional intensity and power ; hence the convergence of mental forces as exhibited in the production of the mind's most brilliant and enduring memorials.

Thus it is virtually assumed, that only those who—in respect to their intellectual progress—*creep* on the earth exhibit a healthy activity and a normal development. If one has a disposition to *soar* as well—to ascend into the ethereal realms—or is gifted with a power to unlock the secrets of Nature and unveil the mysteries of the Heavens, he is at once presumed to be physically and mentally diseased. If he dares to make new discoveries in unfrequented realms ; to exercise

any spiritual faculty of his nature ; or once ventures to pass through

“ That intermediate door
Betwixt the different planes of sensuous form
And form insensuous,”

—he is at once suspected of being unsound in body and mind, and without ceremony included in *the sick list!* This is not an exaggerated statement. It is a *fact*, that not only the medical faculty—more especially of the allopathic school—but the representatives of physical science and popular theology have been wont to regard the vision of the seer, or clairvoyant, whether naturally developed or induced by artificial processes, as the result of existing nervous derangement or abnormal cerebral excitement. Thus the clearest proofs of the divine origin, spiritual nature, and immortal destiny of the human mind are ascribed to *disease!* In attempting to dispose of all modern spiritual experiences in this manner, they boldly strike at all revelations, ancient and modern, and at the common faith of the world.

But *is* the mind most potent when the whole man is sick? *Are* its highest objects obtained when its laws are infringed by the misdirected action of the will? Must it become delirious to solve the problems which mock the calm and orderly exercise of its powers? Is it the prerogative of the mind to *dive* and not to *soar*? And are only madmen commissioned to unfold celestial harmonies and to bring the kingdom of peace on earth? *No ; it is not so.* Indeed, only a negative answer can be given to these questions. It requires no argument to satisfy the rational mind that *the high-*

est achievements of which man's nature is capable will be realized when he acts consistently with the laws of his being. Surely the mind can only exhibit its greatest power when left to its normal action, for then there is little or no resistance, while all its energies coöperate and tend to the same result. A strict observance of the laws of Nature, and the proper conservation of all physical, mental, and moral forces, greatly diminish the friction in all the activities of life. The ordinary operations of mind, as illustrated in the common pursuits of men, are of course most familiar to our daily observation ; but this fact does not warrant the conclusion that they are altogether consistent with the laws of its constitution. Such a conclusion from such premises would only foster our self-love at the expense of the truth. Now, if we cannot rationally accept the familiar operations of the mind, as indicating the measure and the mode of its legitimate exercise and normal capabilities, away goes the stupid and degrading assumption that its noblest gifts are dependent on some corporeal derangement, rather than on God, his ministering Angels, and its own immortal faculties as naturally exercised in the realm of our spiritual relations.

The powers of mind, as developed in men of accredited genius, or otherwise displayed by the seers and prophets of all ages, may be rationally referred to a kind of natural inspiration and a susceptibility of spiritual influence of which the mind may be, and, indeed, *must be*, receptive in the higher planes of its exercise and development. We naturally, and necessarily, derive our impressions from the principles, forces, and objects with which we sustain intimate relations. When,

therefore, the mind is profoundly engrossed with interior realities, it is proportionably withdrawn from the external objects which appeal to the senses, and as naturally receives influxes from the realms of the Invisible, as at other times it perceives the presence and distinguishes the forms and qualities of more material creations. Not only may this idea of inspiration be entertained consistently with the laws and relations of the human mind, but we can only reject it by disregarding the analogies of the Universe, and a vast amount of evidence derived from the actual experience of mankind. All original ideas, and every creation of beauty and use, may be supposed to emanate from that ideal realm—*the world of Spiritual Realities*. If not, why are they born in moments of profound abstraction, when, by intense mental concentration, the sensorial perceptions are deadened and the soul is quickened? Will the materialist tell us, if he can, why the spiritual element enters so largely into the writings of nearly all men of acknowledged genius, if it is not because they are inspired from spheres of supra-mortal intelligence? The man of genius surely does not draw his inspiration from common earth, nor from baser minds; and no man rises above himself in the absence of a power which is able to lift him up to some higher plane of thought and action. Why does the spiritual element predominate in the works of Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, and all true poets, if not for the obvious reason that, in seasons of the greatest mental exaltation, they are essentially removed from the sphere of grosser life, and sublimated in thought and feeling by association with the hidden principles of Nature and Spirits of the immortal world?

The spiritual idea is not only fundamental in the principal religious systems of the world, but it finds a place in the best literature of all ages and countries. These views entirely accord with the actual experience and personal claims of the most exalted natures. Scarcely a great poet, painter, sculptor or musician, has ever lived who was not conscious of drawing his inspiration from some invisible source, while many have professed to be directly assisted by the agency of spirits. The great poets of both ancient and modern times have recognized, not merely the essential principles of the Spiritual Philosophy, but also various phenomenal illustrations of the subject. If the critics had power to take all the spiritual elements out of Homer, Hesiod, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Campbell, Bulwer, Bailey and others, they would rob these authors of their earthly immortality. In the effort to grasp the spiritual idea they reach their loftiest flights. Among the ancient poets Virgil ascends to the heaven of his imagination when, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, he thus describes the spirits of the wicked in the ordeals of purification :

Others are hung up,
Suspended to the empty winds ; under a vast abyss,
The unwrought wickedness is washed from others, or is burnt up by fire.

When the great dramatic poet ascribes motion and speech to stones and trees, we must not interpret the author too literally. He could not have believed that inanimate objects are ever endowed with the power of voluntary motion and the gift of human language. When he affirmed that

“ Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak,”

he did but recognize the invisible powers, which give shape to matter and motion to lifeless things. The spiritual element in Shakespeare's works is further manifest, not only in the wonderful insight which detects the subtile principles and motives which are the springs of human action ; but he summons the shades of departed human beings in "Hamlet" and "Macbeth," and often depends on realms which lie beyond the confines of sensuous life for the characters in his wonderful dramatic creations.

Milton was not indebted to the external world and the mediation of the senses for his grand conceptions. Many of the characters and much of the imagery of his great poem were derived from spheres which mortal eye hath not seen. The essential elements of his faith were something more real than the mere phantoms of a distempered brain. He believed that

"Bright ærial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air ;"

but he did not entertain the materialistic notion now so prevalent, even in the church, that the blessed spirits are all shut up in some local heaven far away, and forever incapable of coming to our assistance. On the contrary, he thus expresses his faith in the perpetual intercourse between the Physical and Spiritual Worlds :

"God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,
Delighted ; and *with frequent intercourse*
Thither will send his wing'd messengers
On errands of supernal grace."

The poet, whose mortal blindness shut out all the objects of

the material world, had his spiritual vision illuminated. The fact is recognized even by those who have no faith in Spiritualism. Dr. Johnson, in a critical review of Milton, thus expressed his idea of the exalted state of the poet's mind and his spiritual relations in his inspired moments :

“God and the angels seemed to approach nearer *and the World of Spirits to open more and more as the Poet retired deeper within his own soul.* Earth could no longer attract or distract his spirit, through sense ; and, chastened by meditation and faith, he saw that higher world to which imagination points, but which the pure, enlightened, and rapt spirit only can behold. And he saw there the drama of Paradise Lost and Regained, and his tongue was inspired to utter what the eye of his soul beheld.”*

It is in the masterly drawing of the character of a Spirit that Milton reaches the highest point to which the genius of the poet may aspire. It was Satan—the impersonation of unqualified selfishness and the love of despotic power—who “would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven.” In referring to the chief of the apostate angels, who still, in spite of his fall, so grandly

“Eminent stood like a tower”—

Another inspired poet, Coleridge, says : “Around this character he has thrown a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendor, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity.”

The spiritual idea, and the overshadowing presence and

* Samuel Johnson, LL D,—one of the most distinguished literary men of the last century,—was not only a devout believer in the existence of Spirits, but also in their capacity to visit their mortal kindred. The subject of Boswell's amusing biography was often ridiculed by people of shallow minds for his belief in ghosts.

influence of celestial visitants, gave Coleridge his inspiration; and in the light of his faith and philosophy,

“ The massive gates of Paradise are thrown
Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
Sweet echoes of unearthly melody,
And odors snatch'd from beds of amaranth.”

The poet attributed his “*Christabel*” to a vision.* He awoke with its recital seemingly ringing in his ear, and immediately wrote out so much as his memory retained. The close of the poem is abrupt, showing that but part of the vision was recollected; nor was the poet ever able to extend and complete it in the manner which characterizes this fragment from the interior temple of the Muses. “*Christabel*” is remarkable enough to have had a spiritual origin—and Coleridge firmly believed in intercourse with spirits. *Kubla Khan*, by the same author, was a dream.

While the mere intellect of Shelley exhibited a strong tendency toward a material philosophy, which recognizes neither God nor his angelic messengers, it is no less true that in moments of great spiritual exaltation his inspiring agents compelled the recognition of their presence. The following is a reference to his friend Keats :

“ He lives, he wakes—’tis Death is dead, not he ;
Mourn not for Adonais. Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for *from thee*
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone.”

While his speculative philosophy was at war with the spirit-

* “ But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the loveliness of a *vision*, I trust that I shall yet be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come.” *Author’s Preface to the English Edition of 1816.*

ual idea, he could not stifle the instinctive yearnings of his higher nature after the realities of another and a better life and world.

A deceased American poet and a most intimate friend of the writer—Mr. Carlos D. Stuart—expressed the same idea in the following extract :

“Shelley’s own soul had need of a God, a heaven, angels and ministering spirits—of communion with intelligence higher than unfolds on earth, in the mortal state ; and if he was too proud to confess it directly, he did it indirectly, uttering his inmost faith through the lips and longings of his Prometheus, Adonais and Alastor. What he bids Asia utter to Panthea, in ‘Prometheus Unbound,’ is his own utterance,

“ ‘ My soul is an enchanted boat,
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing ;
*And thine doth like an angel sit
Beside the helm conducting it ?* ’ ”

Wordsworth evidently believed that the spirit of prophecy is imparted to men in all ages and countries, and that the spiritual senses may be quickened on Earth by super-terrestrial influence. In the preface to the “Excursion” he thus invokes the presence of that spirit :

“Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspirest
The human soul of universal earth,
Dreaming on things to come ; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty poets ; upon me bestow
A gift of genuine insight.”

Campbell employs the spiritual element in his poems, of which we have an example in the interview between the Seer and the warlike chief of the Camerons. The latter is on his

way to join the standard of Charles Stuart, when he is met by the Seer, who predicts his overthrow. Lochiel denounces him as a vile wizard, and the Seer, insisting that he cannot hide the terrible vision, is made to say :

“For dark and despairing, my sight I may seal,
But man cannot cover what God would reveal ;
’Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.”

The Seer proceeds to give a graphic description of the catastrophe. The field and the conflict are before him ; and as the Pretender and his legions fly in vision from the bloody scenes of Culloden, the prophet invokes the “wild tempest” —as though the elements themselves were governed by spiritual powers—to rise and “cover his flight.”*

Philip James Bailey includes numerous Spirits and Angels in the *dramatis personæ* of his remarkable poem, which—judging from the internal evidence—was probably a genuine inspiration from the Spirit-World. Festus thus describes the manner in which the celestial visitors appear :

“Light as a leaf they step, or arrowy
Floating of breeze upon a waveless pool ;
Sudden and soft, too, like a waft of light,
The beautiful immortals come to me.”

* Paul refers “to the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. ii. 2) ; and to the “great cloud of witnesses” (Heb. xii. 1), meaning the early Patriarchs, Moses, the Prophets, and others, who, by faith, are said to have vanquished their enemies, etc., setting an example of fidelity to their convictions, and departing this life in solemn trust, “of whom the world was not worthy.” The living are said to be “compassed about” by these immortal witnesses.

Festus is interrogated respecting the general subjects upon which the Angels are accustomed to discourse, and he thus proceeds to answer the fair questioner :

“Some say most
 About the future ; others of the gone—
 The dim traditions of Eternity,
 Or Time’s first golden moments. One there was,
 From whose sweet lips elapsed as from a well,
 Continuously, truths which made my soul,
 As they sank into it, fertile with rich thoughts—
 Spoke to me oft of Heaven, and our talk
 Was of Divine things alway—Angels, Heaven,
 Salvation, immortality, and God ;
 The different states of Spirits, and the kinds
 Of being in all orbs, or physical,
 Or intellectual. I never tired
 Preferring questions, but at each response
 My soul drew back, sea-like, into its depths,
 To urge another charge on him. This Spirit
 Came to me daily for a long, long time,
 Whene’er I prayed his presence. Many a world
 He knew right well, which man’s eye never yet
 Hath marked, nor ever may mark while on earth ;
 Yet grew his knowledge every time he came.

* * * * *

He was to me an all-explaining Spirit,
 Teaching Divine things by analogy
 With mortal and material.”

Having already filled the space allotted to this article, I cannot here introduce examples from our American poets. At another time the writer may, perhaps, consider the relations of the human mind to the spiritual sources of inspiration as further illustrated in literature, and in the works of the more celebrated painters and musical composers. In all

eras and dispensations the natural and human have sustained intimate and unbroken relations to the spiritual and divine. It is not strange, therefore, as civilization advances, and the human mind develops its higher faculties, that the relations of living thoughts and noble deeds to the realms of super-terrestrial influence and spiritual causation are daily becoming more apparent. Similar illustrations of the general subject are scattered throughout the history of all the Fine Arts. The cardinal facts and ideas of the Spiritual Philosophy are now rapidly finding a place in the best of our current literature and likewise in the minds of English scientists and German philosophers. Indeed, there never was a time when they did not occupy a place in the writings of men of genius.

The author of "Midnight Musings"—who certainly was never an eminently spiritual man—is rather disposed to accept the idea that spiritual beings

“—— walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.”

The man who has no conception of spiritual things himself reveals the groveling nature of his life. The truth comes naturally to every one when the mind reaches the required moral and spiritual elevation.

“ While we yet have on
Our gross investiture of mortal weeds,”

most men naturally cling to all earthly things. Although the mind of Washington Irving was of the sensuous type, the following brief extract is a significant expression of his reverential views on the general subject of this essay :

“Is then this space between us and the Deity filled up with innumerable orders of spiritual beings, forming the same gradations between the human soul and divine perfection, that we see prevailing from humanity down to the meanest insect? It is a sublime and beautiful doctrine, inculcated by the fathers, that there are guardian Angels appointed to watch over cities and nations, to take care of good men, and to guard and guide the steps of helpless infancy. Even the doctrine of departed spirits returning to visit the scenes and beings which were dear to them during the body's existence, though it has been debased by the absurd superstitions of the vulgar, in itself is awfully solemn and sublime.”

This testimony, from one of the most distinguished American authors, should humble the pride and rebuke the ignorant self-conceit of that numerous class of inferior writers, who arrogantly denounce the very idea as a wicked imposture, and its realization as impossible in the nature of things. Few authors of commanding ability and reputation, who have made contributions to our literature which give promise of imperishable vitality, have ever manifested a disposition to deride the just claims of Spiritualism. If they have not been prepared to accept the truth with becoming reverence and unspeakable joy, they have, at least, been disposed to honor human nature by treating the whole subject with profound respect.

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, *Warren County, N. J.*

RELIGION OF FAITH AND FASHION.

REV. DR. JOHN HALL AND THE LOGIC OF THE PULPIT.

FROM TRUTH, JANUARY 20TH, 1880.

Millions in one Christian Temple—Sufferers from Cold, Hunger, and Nakedness in its Shadow—Who will save the Neglected Ones?—The Doctor discourses on “Faith and Science”—A Theologian answers Huxley—Who will answer the Cry of the Poor?—Does the Bible lead Modern Science?—Aromatic Airs and bad Logic at \$20,000 a Year—Relations of the Serpent to Popular Theology—Ireland’s War on Snakes—St. Patrick slays the last in the Lake of Killarney—A Doctor of Divinity against Science and History—The Office of Science is to Formulate the Truth.

To the Editor of Truth :

IN your recent editorials referring to Rev. John Hall, D.D., and his church, you naturally enough associate Religion and Fashion. In the estimation of our pious aristocracy the Doctor’s views and ideas derive a fictitious importance for the reasons that his church edifice is on Fifth avenue, and that he worships God for himself and his congregation in a temple that cost \$2,000,000 ! It is a fact that within five miles of that imposing symbol of the popular faith, there are 50,000 people who are neither half fed nor clothed ; who shiver in these January days with little or no fire, and nightly go, hungry and cold, to a bed of straw in some place comfortless and desolate as a kennel.

Every Sabbath the prayers of the *elite* of the elect—the bejeweled saints, like Dives, so gorgeously arrayed “in purple and fine linen”—ascend and blend with the elements of

common air—the fine odor of sanctification and the delicate aromas of Lubin's Extracts mingling together. How high the prayers ascend we may or may not conjecture. And then the piping voices of many little children, hungry and half naked, who have no homes; the feeble accents of delicate, sick, and destitute women in the next street, and the tremulous words of old men, stricken by many years and the shafts of a cruel fortune—all come up in remembrance before God, while they seem to be neglected and forgotten by this saintly aristocracy of the Church.

What intimate and endearing relation Dr. Hall sustains to Jesus and the Poor, we may not know. By what divine authority he was called at \$20,000 (?) a year to preach the Gospel of a poor Man "who had not where to lay his head," we have not yet discovered; but he is certainly a very fallible human teacher. Some time ago he delivered a discourse on "Faith and Science"—it was elicited by Professor Huxley's lectures—which was at least remarkable for bold, dogmatic assumptions, unsupported by any citation of facts or a single logical reason. Dr. Hall assumed that the essential elements of matter were acted upon and the worlds fashioned by the Divine Volition, and furthermore that *the creation of matter, per se*, "is an article of faith." In his blind zeal for a book he transcended the letter of the Mosaic record, which nowhere assumes so much. The Doctor imposes a more onerous tax on our credulity than Moses did; and this appears to be both unnecessary and unwise in the present state of the human mind. To demand faith in an increased number of improbabilities, in this age of rational inquiry and

scientific demonstration, will surely prompt many minds to unload, and leave the remaining lumber of old theories and superstitions to those who keep the antiquarian museums of a Saurian theology.

In his contest with Huxley and the philosophy of evolution, Dr. Hall distinctly intimated that we are liable to misread the fossiliferous formations, as well as the Jewish Scriptures. This is a shrewd suggestion. Such mistakes are quite possible; and it must be acknowledged that the professed scientist is often quite as dogmatic as the average teacher of biblical theology. We need not look for infallibility in either, and it may soon become our appropriate business to put both on their trial by a higher standard. When that time comes we may fearlessly sift their respective pretensions to superior light and supreme authority.

The distinguished expounder of the faith of the Presbyterian Church referred to the fact that St. Augustin, a man of "scientific attainments, suggested the theory that the world was created during periods as distinguished from days;" and from such hypothetical premises he advanced *per saltum* to the following conclusion :

"We find that the Bible has been the leader of scientific thought; that imperfect science has caused misunderstanding of its statements, and that upon further progress of science its perfect truth has been established."

The imperfection of the Doctor's logic will be readily perceived in the fact that his premises have a strictly personal relation to St. Augustin, while his conclusion is divorced from any such relation, either to the English apostle or any other man, and has no reference or application whatever, save to a

book. If Dr. Hall eats muffins for breakfast, he may just as well argue from this fact that the Westminster Catechism has been the leader of thought in the science of agricultural chemistry. It would be far more logical—reasoning from the fact—to infer that St. Patrick was opposed to the Church which makes the serpent an indispensable factor in its whole system of theology. Did not the good Saint make war on snakes? Did he not drive them all out of Ireland, and destroy the last one in the Lake of Killarney? And yet who does not know that the integrity of the entire system of popular theology is made to depend on our saving one serpent at least? Without one snake the Doctor's theological superstructure, embracing the primitive innocence, the temptation, the fall, vicarious atonement, and salvation through the merits of some one else, would fall to the ground and leave no sign of life for our contemplation, save the trail of the serpent among the ruins of the system.

It was not so much as a saint as a scientist, that Augustin offered his suggestion. It was because he saw the necessity of accommodating his interpretation of the Scriptures to the existing and prospective discoveries of science. The idea that the Bible has been the leader of scientific thought is an assumption that rests on no possible foundation. It finds no confirmation in the records of astronomy, geology, or other branches of natural science. We put in evidence against the Doctor the history of scientific investigation and discovery; the personal experiences of many noble disciples of truth; the ostracisms of the lovers of Nature by the mitred representatives of Faith, and the present infidel tendencies of most

of the leading scientists throughout the world. If any further refutation were required, we might offer the case of Hall versus Huxley, which clearly enough illustrates the fact that "the defenders of the faith" are not the leaders of science.

Dr. Hall reveals his unreasoning adherence to a narrow creed, at the same time he betrays a very limited knowledge of science in his false definition of the latter. He boldly declares that the proper business of "science is to confirm the word of God!" The man who now teaches such a doctrine is far behind the age in which he lives. For this reason he ought to "step down and out," and leave some one baptized into the living spirit of the times to occupy his place. We undertake to say that science has no such questionable business on hand as is described by this expounder of modern theology. On the contrary, the legitimate office of science is to so formulate the truth, on all subjects, that it may be clearly expressed and systematically taught. We have quite too much reverence for God's word, wherever that may be found, to presume for a moment that it needs any confirmation.

Yours for truth,

S. B. BRITTAN.

NEW YORK, *Jan.* 18, 1880.

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

WANDERING AND CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS.

FROM THE ROCHESTER (N. Y.) DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE, FEB. 22, 1880.

Rambler on Spiritualism—The Great Question of the Ages—Disputing the Evidence of the Senses—Assumed Premises and Illogical Reasoning—Illusions and Hallucinations—Sensorial Evidence the Bases of Science and Jurisprudence—Rambler Losing both Sense and Reason, Strikes at the Foundation—Important Facts in Illustration—Amazing Power of the Spirits—A Sudden Conversion—Cogent Appeal to the Understanding.

To the Editor of the Democrat and Chronicle :

SIR : I find on your editorial page, in the issue of the 31st of January, an article—in the special department of the Rambler—which is mainly devoted to Modern Spiritualism. The writer is supposed to belong to the staff, though himself disclaiming editorial responsibility for what he writes. As the subject has come to occupy a large share of public attention among all civilized peoples, it is eminently proper that its facts and philosophy should be freely discussed, always in the fair and liberal spirit which should characterize all scientific and religious controversies. I have no fault to find with the general spirit in which Rambler is pleased to express his thoughts and opinions on the most important question of the ages, though I take the liberty to dissent from his limited views and illogical conclusions. I copy the following from his introduction, which certainly gives promise of a candid

examination and considerate treatment of whatever may be said, in a similar spirit, on the opposite side of a very grave question :

“ The Rambler is in a serious mood to-day, and desires to talk seriously and wholly upon one subject, with many friends, whom he respects thoroughly, and that without holding the journal for which he writes in any way responsible for his views. It has fallen lately to his lot to see something of the manifestations of so-called Spiritualism, and he confesses himself to be a skeptic in regard to their validity, although he hopes that he is not so obstinate as to refuse to be convinced upon evidence that is indisputable. He permits himself to note certain objections to these manifestations, with entire respect towards those who credit them, and more with the idea of elucidating truth, than in a spirit of captious criticism.”

I respect every honest skeptic, while I honor the man who only yields to conviction under the force of evidence. The present writer has trained in that company for more than forty years, and looks for no promotion from the ranks that will interrupt his existing relations. In speaking of a case of slate-writing in which neither the medium nor any one else touched the slate, on which occasion two senses, hearing and sight, gave concurrent testimony to the reality of the fact, the party receiving the communication desired to know how Rambler would account for the phenomenon. We copy the answer from the article under review :

“ My dear sir, I distrust the evidence of your senses, as you should yourself distrust. You think you saw what you say you saw. I do not believe you saw any such thing. Such language may seem harsh, but it is amply justified by the facts which confront us every day, in regard to the imperfection of the senses. ‘ Can’t I trust my eyes ; can’t I trust my ears ; can’t I trust my sense of touch ? ’ indignantly asked the gentleman. No, sir ; that is precisely what you cannot do.”

Here Rambler boldly takes his stand on a question that is fundamentally important ; and this must be settled before we can offer any illustrative facts or personal testimony in support of the claims of Spiritualism. The question is, Can we ordinarily depend on the five senses as organic instruments of the human mind, and channels of reliable information respecting the forms of Nature and Art ; the relations of these to each other and to the observer ; the natural and mechanical movements of ponderable bodies ; chemical changes and organic developments ; in the inspection of natural phenomena within the limits of sensorial observation ; and for the essential facts and more important details of every day's experience ?

I have no disposition to dodge the main question ; I can not treat it lightly ; but I will meet it fairly. We can not admit that the purpose of the Creator, in bestowing the five senses on mankind, *was to deceive his creatures*. Such an assumption, however disguised, would not only be a blasphemous attempt to impeach the creative wisdom, but it would be ascribing a most diabolical character and purpose to the Father of our spirits. I am sure we can not reject such a monstrous conception with too much emphasis to meet the views of Rambler. If, however, whilst admitting that the senses and their organs were primarily bestowed on man for wise and beneficent purposes, it should be maintained that they have become so impaired and perverted by disease and abuse as to be generally unreliable, I need only say that this position is equally untenable. Indeed, it is boldly disputed by the most eminent physiologists and practitioners of the

healing art; by the science of man and our medical jurisprudence; by the principles and tribunals of the law, and by the common sense of mankind.

That the organic instruments of sensation do sometimes become diseased is readily admitted. We know that when they are greatly impaired by time and use, or seriously deranged by disease or accident, they are liable to convey false information to the mind. But it is not true as a rule that men and women hear voices when no one speaks; or that they see objective forms where none exist. Because the crystalline lens in one man in ten thousand is opaque, can Rambler show us a cataract in every man's eye? If one man has ossification of his tympanum, shall we infer that all the world is deaf? No! These cases are only the occasional exceptions to the rule that holds good in all ages and countries, and among all races and nations.

The instances in which the senses may be said to deceive us are comparatively very few, and depend on physical disease or some derangement of the organic instruments of sensation. It is proper to observe that the cases in which the imagination plays an important part in shaping and distorting our sensorial impressions are more numerous. When the timid mind is filled with apprehension of some fearful presence or impending evil, it unconsciously to the individual transforms inanimate objects into wild beasts, and spectral forms—born of our childish fears—start into seeming objectivity with every semblance of a terrible reality. But these are not cases in which we are deceived by the sense of vision. They are not optical illusions. The metaphysical philosopher

knows very well that *these are hallucinations of the mind* ; and if the examples were a thousand times more numerous than they really are, they would by no means justify this attempt to impeach the testimony of the physical senses, on which the natural man must inevitably rely for all his knowledge of the external world.

The cases in which two or more of the senses give false information, whilst reason is unimpaired and the mind otherwise in a normal state, are probably not one in one hundred thousand. It is well known that our observations of the phenomena of the physical Universe must be conducted largely through the instrumentality of a single sense. The revelations of the whole astral system ; the eclipses of the sun and moon ; the transits of the heavenly bodies ; the visits of comets, which, after an absence of centuries, come back to us

“ From the dread immensity of space,”

together with the larger part of all meteoric phenomena, are only revealed to the mind through the eye. In all these vast fields of observation we have to depend on the testimony of a single sense ; and yet our astronomers regard this alone as sufficient in attestation of the facts that come within the field of the telescope.

The assumption of Rambler that we cannot depend on the integrity of the senses, is utterly indefensible from the scientific point of view. Indeed, all modern science rests securely on this basis and no other. If we presume to offer evidence derived from our spiritual perceptions and inward consciousness, your materialistic scientists regard the act as something

like discourtesy. If some gifted soul, in a state of magnetic or spiritual entrancement, sees anything without the use of the eye, we are told that the alleged fact is an idle dream or distempered fancy. If facts are disclosed, or information given, a knowledge of which could not, in the nature of the case, have been obtained through any external channel of communication, we are thereupon gravely entertained with a disquisition on popularized frauds and professional jugglery. Nevertheless, science is everywhere on record as depending on the physical senses as means of reliable information. Its accredited teachers unwisely reject all other sources of evidence, and, to be consistent with themselves, must discard the claims of revealed religion. Facts observed through the organic avenues of sensation are the foundation stones of its temple, and the solid materials of the whole superstructure. To depend on any other foundation is—in the judgment of our scientific philosophers—to build upon the shifting sands of the idler's speculation.

“ The theories, that scale Empyrean heights
Should rest on granite ledges, solid truths,
Touched, seen, felt, comprehended by the race.
Who builds a pyramid on winter ice?
Who spans an arch from buttresses of sand?
The obelisk that cleaves the flying clouds,
Rises from bases massive as the world ! ”

So far as Rambler presumes to reason at all, he rests his argument and conclusion on a mere assumption which has no possible foundation in either fact, law, or reason. It will be perceived that his premises can never be reconciled with scientific principles and methods, nor do they find any sanction

in the common experience of mankind. Surely, Rambler can never have weighed the momentous consequences which must inevitably follow the adoption of such premises. Every novice knows that the Spiritual Phenomena are observed through the same organic instruments of sensorial perception which the scientist employs in all his investigations. The civil and criminal codes, and the *lex non scripta* of all nations, accept such evidence. Facts, as thus observed, determine the application of the law in each particular case. Every witness placed on the stand is an open proclamation by the court that the human senses, exercised through the physical organs, not only may be, but *must be* depended upon as the only means and instruments whereby reliable information can be obtained, and upon such evidence alone the tribunal must rest its judgment.

Now when Rambler disputes the evidence of the senses, he boldly strikes at the very foundations of the temple of science ; of our civil and criminal jurisprudence, and of all the institutions of social life and civil government. If one is not competent to testify that a table, or other ponderable body, moved in his presence without any visible cause of motion, how can he swear that A committed an assault on B, or affirm that any fact in physical science ever really occurred ? The acceptance of Rambler's premises—could they be demonstrated to be true—would leave the temple of science in ruins, the majesty of the law dethroned, and our deepest convictions unsettled forever. It would render all history and experimental philosophy valueless ; and institutions which have braved the revolutionary conflicts of centuries, and sur-

vived the downfall of empires, would be overthrown to be reconstructed no more.

In finding the unsubstantial ground of his main position, Rambler seems to have wandered as far from the realm of reason as from the principles and methods of accredited science. Many opposers of Spiritualism are pleased to associate the idea of *insanity* with the acceptance of its demonstrated facts and sublime philosophy. But if one may seriously propose to reject the evidence of his own senses, and yet escape the suspicion of being insane, surely no medico-legal commission in lunacy should ever think of searching among Spiritualists for examples.

The enlightened observer will have already discovered that the hypotheses of optical illusions and psychological hallucinations are wholly insufficient to cover the facts, as may be more clearly shown by illustrative examples. The writer has a friend, a distinguished legislator and journalist, who, on one occasion, had a small but intelligent assembly at his residence, including D. D. Home, the medium. In the course of the evening the conversation turned on a question involving the nature of the subtile agents employed in moving ponderable bodies, and the measure of power which spirits may be capable of exercising over the elements and forms of matter. The invisibles improved the occasion to illustrate the subject, by completely demolishing a firmly constructed table. Some time after, the gentleman, at whose house this manifestation occurred, had occasion to mention the fact in an interview with some friends, when one of the company observed that the speaker must have been deceived by some

psychological spell or other illusion ; to which my friend replied : "*Psychologized ! A psychological spell never broke a table. You had better go and look in my garret ; we were careful to save the pieces. You will find them all there ; but it will require the skill of a mechanic to put them together.*"

The writer was once present at a *séance* where there were some thirty ladies and gentlemen—including distinguished members of the press and the *literati* of Boston—at the residence of the late Alvin Adams, whose name, as the founder of the great Express Company, is a household word throughout the civilized world. The principal medium on that occasion was a young divinity student, in very delicate health, who for some time had been suffering from pulmonary hemorrhage. Kneeling on a rug before a grand piano, he ran his fingers over the keys and played a medley, when the front of the instrument—rising as if deprived of all gravity—marked the measure of the music with the utmost precision, making all the changes of time in the fragmentary passages of the different compositions. Subsequently, in the course of the evening, three heavy men, whose aggregate weight was over six hundred pounds, seated themselves on the front of the piano, at the right and left of the key-board, when the same remarkable phenomena were repeated, the instrument, with its superincumbent burden, moving with the same apparent ease, freedom and precision as before. I must not omit to mention in this connection that the parlors were brilliantly illuminated during the entire performance.

In the company present there was at least one honest believer in the hallucination hypothesis. Looking on with an

expression of great astonishment, he occasionally rubbed his eyes, and at length said to the writer: "It really appears to move; but I don't believe it does. I must be hallucinated like the rest of the company." Responding to the gentleman, I said in a low voice, yes, it certainly does seem to move, and in a manner that impressively suggests the presence of some invisible intelligence possessing amazing power. I then added, in a serio-facetious manner, the suggestion that there was one way in which he might, perhaps, settle the question to his entire satisfaction. When the grand piano appeared to rise he had only to make the attempt to put his foot under that of the instrument. The man did not look like a lunatic, and the thought never entered the mind, that he was so crazy in his skepticism as to act on my suggestion. To my utter astonishment he demonstrated his verdant simplicity by making the experiment, thus showing how

"Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread."

Just then he felt—as down came the instrument, with the other "heavy weights"—something like the tread of an elephant on his toes. The result was, Spiritualism made another convert. It will be remembered that the spirits made short work of converting Saul of Tarsus; they met him in the way and knocked him down, when he suddenly saw "a great light." This man fell in a similar manner, and the depth of his conviction was only equaled by *the unusual weight of the evidence on his understanding!*

Trusting to your love of justice, and your respect for a numerous class of people in every community—whom, at least in

some important sense, I have the honor to serve—I respectfully solicit the publication of this letter. Believe me, Gentlemen—for the fair and equal representation of all classes in society and their views, respectively—on the great question of a demonstrated immortality,

I am yours sincerely,

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, }
NEW YORK, *Feb.* 16, 1880. }

“THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT.”—The approaching conflict may not be altogether confined to the realm of thought, and the arena of intellectual and moral controversy. When special legislation is evoked, not only to arrest the progress of ideas, but to arbitrarily uphold the dying institutions that have already outlived their usefulness, we are not likely to be invited to a parlor entertainment. The enemy is sure to hit us with something harder than a battledoor, and we shall require to be armed with something better than a shuttlecock. A soft flesh-brush, or a soup-ladle, will never answer the purpose. We need the sharpest and most pointed weapons, and, I am happy to say, they are within our reach. “The sword of the spirit”—*the naked Truth*—driven home to the brain and the heart, is keener far than a Damascus blade ; and it only remains for us to organize our forces and prepare for the impending battle.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

REVIEW OF REV. JOSEPH COOK'S LECTURES.

FROM THE BOSTON HERALD, FEB. 28, 1880.

The Religion of Jesus rests on Spiritual Facts—What Spiritualism Comprehends—Author of the Monday Lectures not a Spiritual Man—Crude Classification of Spiritualists—Religion of the Future—Mr. Cook lost in the fog of Supernaturalism—Man belongs to the Natural Sphere—Another call for a Scientific Investigation—Scientists answer, but the Clergy do not hear—The Quality of Charity.

To the Editor of the Herald:

IN the popular lectures now in course of delivery by REV. JOSEPH COOK of your city, Spiritualism furnishes the principal theme. From the reports of the first and second lectures, it clearly appears that the reverend gentleman is not inclined to view the subject with any considerable degree of favor. And yet such a gracious treatment would seem to be most becoming the ministerial representative of a Religion which rests all demands upon our faith and reverence on Spiritual Phenomena—on the facts which at once emphasized the claims of its Founder, and signalized the ministry of his earliest disciples. It is also made to appear that Mr. Cook is not naturally inclined to spiritual things from any special adaptation of his mind and general constitution to the superior field of thought and investigation which he essays to explore in his present lectures. It is no fault of the lecturer that he does not bring to the consideration of this subject the

peculiar type of mind that readily apprehends and assimilates metaphysical principles and spiritual truths. This may be regarded as a defect in the organization of a Christian minister, and it is quite sufficient to account for many crude conceptions, and a confused state of mind which may naturally suggest the chaos of Moses, which is represented to have been "without form and void."

Any attempt to follow Rev. Mr. Cook in the details of his desultory observations would oblige the writer to far transcend the prescribed limits of this letter. For this reason the reviewer must adopt a brief and comprehensive method, by considering only such questions as are fundamental in the present controversy.

Speaking of the believers in Spiritualism, Mr. Cook observes that they are divided into the two classes of Christian and infidel Spiritualists; that the last mentioned class is by far the more numerous; and he continues by saying: "An infidel Spiritualist is evidently the most inconsistent of infidels. The modern Spiritualist is the last man who can consistently dispute the fact of the supernatural." That many persons, who accept the cardinal fact of actual intercourse with spirits, are infidel in some of the relations of life, we have no reason to doubt, and we shall not attempt to stay the hand of any man who may be pleased to chastise them in the spirit of Christian charity. But we object to Mr. Cook's most remarkable generalization, as illustrated in the indiscriminate application of his free gospel lash. The great body of the people here described as infidel, numbering some millions, in every rank and condition of life, are not traitors

to their country ; they are not false to the civil and political institutions under which they live ; nor are they hostile to any great interest of humanity. It is true that the more numerous class of believers in the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism have not thought it wise to prefix the word Christian to the name which, in their minds, comprehends all the elements required to formulate a profound and comprehensive science ; the essential principles of a far-reaching philosophy, whose sublime induction extends to other worlds, material and spiritual, and embraces all the forms of matter, life, and mind ; together with those moral forces and diviner agents which represent all that is most sacred in the great Eclectic Religion of the future, which is to comprehend whatever is pure, wise, and ennobling in the systems of all ages and countries. A people entertaining such views cannot be infidel, in any sense that implies their rejection of aught that is essentially good and true ; and to stigmatize them as such is to foolishly misrepresent their principles and their character before the world. On the question that relates to the supernatural, Mr. Cook seems to be lost in the same fog which has obscured the mental vision of nearly all who have hitherto participated in this controversy. To the discussion of this subject, especially, we may—without injustice to the theologians—apply the following lines of the poet :

“ The tree of knowledge, blasted by disputes,
Yields only sapless leaves, instead of fruits.”

Mr. Cook's discourses on the supernatural thus far discover no clearly defined ideas. He does not attempt to tell us how much is really embraced in the wide domain of Nature. He

draws no lines and indicates no limit beyond which we are to regard all objects as supernatural creations, and all phenomena as produced by supernatural means and agents. So far from explaining any principle in the natural world, or indicating a recognition of any law of the Spiritual Universe that may be supposed to govern the occurrences which are presumed to transcend the sublime possibilities of Nature, he does not so much as offer us a single lucid definition of the smallest thing, either in heaven or on earth. At this rate the discussion might go on until the final judgment, and nothing would be settled. Now if we can only find some solid, central ground where all the contending parties in this controversy may stand, we shall be obliged to see the subject from the same point of observation. This is all that is required to terminate the discussion about the natural and supernatural, which has agitated the church so long. If we can agree to accept one and the same definition of Nature, this "holy (?) war" will inevitably cease, and Bro. Cook will see Spiritualism from a new standpoint, and in a clearer light.

Here let me inquire, How much does Nature embrace? That it includes everything which belongs to the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, there can be no doubt. But does Man belong to nature? All will agree that the human body is a part of the natural creation. When it is decomposed, all its chemical constituents go back into the great laboratory of Nature where they belong. In like manner all the imponderable elements and forces, which determine the organic functions of the living body, go out to mingle with the similar elements of earth and air and water. If man—in

respect to his objectivity and personality—is a part of Nature, we must logically infer that all his faculties, affections, passions, susceptibilities and aspirations are properly included in the grand economy of the natural world. But if the human mind, *per se*, is not really a part of the natural creation, then we must logically conclude that its functions, even in this life, are all supernaturally performed. We may not conjecture what a theologian might do, if rendered desperate by being confined to “the ragged edge” of an unanswerable argument, but we are sure that no man, in a normal state of mind, will assume this extraordinary ground. The human mind being a part, and the crowning glory of the natural creation, it follows that the exercise of its faculties, in whatever state of being, and the expression of its thoughts and ideas, through whatever medium or channel of communication, is altogether natural. The final conclusion is, therefore, inevitable: Inasmuch as the modern phenomena are but the diversified exhibitions of human intelligence, we can arrive at no other judgment but that they are strictly natural and in harmony with the discovered laws and relations of mind and matter.

The reader will now be able to see the reason why enlightened and philosophical Spiritualists do not believe in supernaturalism. It is because Nature—in their view of the subject—is an institution so vast as to embrace the whole field of human observation. The Church does believe it (it always clings to its own dogmas), for the obvious reason that its conception of the subject is limited by its own contracted and ignoble views of the extent and resources of this divine

natural economy of the world. The rational Spiritualist may not deny the very facts which the Church regards as miraculous ; but his broader view of the possibilities of Nature, and his deeper comprehension of essential principles, enable him to ascribe the same to causes and agents, which are at once both spiritual and natural. We respectfully suggest that the reason why Bro. Cook believes in supernaturalism, may be found in the fact that his own beggarly idea of Nature only includes the few things he can either see, taste, smell, handle, weigh, dissect, or put in a crucible. We must assure him that we are no representative of infidelity in any sense in which an intelligent and fair-minded man is likely to use the word ; but must candidly admit that our conception of Nature is so large that we have no room for the supernatural within the vast realm of human research and scientific discovery.

Mr. Cook assumes that Spiritualism is little if anything more than a series of hypothetical propositions, which, so far as they have not been already exploded, remain to be demonstrated. He insists that the facts have not yet been scientifically investigated, notwithstanding it is well known that since the conversion of our own Dr. Robert Hare—more than a quarter of a century ago—scores of scientists and philosophers, in every part of the civilized world, have not only recognized the facts, but have authenticated their spiritual claims. If it shall finally appear that the manifestations have a spiritual origin—even though they be found to be the work of devils—Mr. Cook may, possibly, with some show of reluctance, accept them, because he can turn the facts to practical

account in his warfare against infidelity and in defence of his theological supernaturalism.

Whoever would reach the high plane of true charity, must rise above the narrow views of noisy sectarists ; forget his private aims and selfish loves, in deference to his kind. Charity looks with lenient eye on different peoples, parties, and religions, and judges all in righteousness.

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, }
NEW YORK, *Feb.* 30, 1880. }

THE WASTER AND THE BUILDER.—We have reviewed the lawless army of the Iconoclasts, and the implements of destruction in their hands. In their madness they hurled the ancient idols from their pedestals, demolished the temples, and extinguished the fires on the old altars. The very ground beneath the feet of the invaders is covered with the fragments of sacred images. With a fine sense of propriety the Iscariots went out early—probably to hang themselves, as they have not returned. The Waster has had his day. He came in the morning ; and, lo ! at the evening his work was done. Many were sorrowful while they gazed on the ruins.

“ Gray-bearded Use, who, deaf and blind,
Groped for his old accustomed stone,
Leaned on his staff, and wept, to find
His seat o'erthrown.”

Now let the Waster go his way and give place to the Builder.

THE SPIRITUAL CONTROVERSY.

A MODERN SAMSON PULLING AT THE PILLARS.

FROM THE CINCINNATI (OHIO) DAILY ENQUIRER, MARCH 22, 1880.

Independence of the Enquirer—Judge and Mrs. A. G. W. Carter—Hon. Nelson Cross—The Ex-President of Columbia University—Charmed Life of Spiritualism—Cicero on Divination—A Distinction without a Difference—Philological and Theological Exposition—Looking into the dead Past for Wisdom—More Syntax than Sense—Has Divinity lost the power of Speech?—Fox Sisters, Professor Morse and the Scientists—Dr. Samson's Explanation of the Rappings—Explosive Discharges of Nerve Force!—Science and the *Experimentum Crucis*—The Doctor's Unphilosophical Classification—Demonstration versus Dogmatism—The Living Oracles are never Dumb.

To the Editor of the Enquirer :

THE tolerant and liberal spirit of your excellent journal in permitting, within reasonable limits, a discussion of the facts, philosophy and claims of Modern Spiritualism, is a subject of observation far beyond the limits of your own State. The papers contributed by Judge A. G. W. Carter have attracted considerable attention, and furnished matters of frequent comment in the circle of his friends in this city. Among the more intellectual class of Spiritualists in New York the Judge and Mrs. Carter have many friends, including Hon. Nelson Cross, who will be remembered as formerly belonging to the Bar and Bench of your city. It having been suggested to me that a letter on any of the living issues or current topics connected with Spiritualism might meet with favor at your hands, I have concluded to act on the sugges-

tion, and will improve this occasion by a brief commentary on the recent labors of "Rev. Dr. Samson, Ex-President of Columbia University." This eminent divine and teacher very recently delivered a discourse against Spiritualism, in Trinity Baptist Church of this city, which was not especially remarkable for originality of thought, or, indeed, for anything new in the *argumentum ad hominem* of the opposition.

Many theological Samsons have employed similar means and instruments in their futile attempts to annihilate Spiritualism. But, for some reason not clearly understood by those who oppose it, this thing possesses a charmed life, and opposition only seems to stimulate its growth. That some of the spirits, especially in the cabinet exhibitions, are incarnated in "too solid flesh," I have no doubt ; and yet it is impossible to conceal the fact that the spirits are often so intangible that the famous weapon employed by the original Samson never hits these ethereal beings a fatal blow. And so these spirits enjoy an immunity that provokes the saints to anger, while it excites the special wonder of the rest of mankind. I copy the following from the report of Dr. Samson's lecture :

"Dr. Samson said divination was as old as history, and among heathen people it took the place of revelation. Cicero wrote an extensive book on divination, and those who would take the trouble to read it would be surprised to learn how little there is in modern Spiritualism that is new. The ancient magicians knew more about such things than any one can understand at the present day."

Here a distinction is made which can only produce a confusion of ideas, since it is calculated to mislead the common mind. If there was really any essential difference between the revelations of Jewish prophets and the results of divina-

tion as practiced by Pagan nations, would it not have been well for the venerable ex-President to have explained that difference in a manner that could have been understood by his hearers? The truth is, there was never any such difference as warrants the Reverend Doctor's distinction. Divination is thus defined by Webster: "Foretelling future events, or discovering things secret or obscure, by the aid of superior beings, or by other than human means. Among the ancient heathen philosophers natural divination was supposed to be effected by a divine afflatus." Now, what is Revelation, *par excellence*, more than is embraced in the definition already given? It is essentially the same thing—the unveiling, uncovering, or otherwise disclosing by other than merely human means things before concealed or unknown. In a specific sense, as defined by theological expositors, a revelation is a "communication of that which could not be known or discovered without divine or supernatural instruction."

In referring this question to the arbitration of philologists and theologians, we discover that there is really no essential difference between divination and revelation. Both are said to uncover what was hidden; to expose to view something that was concealed; to make known things which were before unknown; and to employ supra-mortal intelligences in making such disclosures. The superficial differences of nationality, forms of religion and worship, historic periods and degrees of civilization, in no way change the fundamental principles of the subject. If it is to be viewed from a scientific standpoint, we must fearlessly analyze the facts, and the intrinsic nature of the same must determine their proper classification,

regardless of all extrinsic circumstances and the superficial aspects derived from the time and place of their occurrence. The methods in what are called divination and revelation are similar, if not identical. Both contemplate the use of "other than human means"—the agency of invisible powers or superior beings; and, as the ultimate source of their inspiration, the inbreathing of the Divine Spirit. If the Jew and Christian, in their search for ultimate causes—in the last analysis—refer the most refined and exalted super-sensuous influences to God, so did the heathen philosophers ascribe their highest inspiration to "a Divine afflatus." Every scholar knows all this, not even excepting those who make a virtue of using words to conceal the truth.

The declaration that "the ancient magicians knew more about such things than any one can understand at the present day," involves the incredible announcement that the race has degenerated and lost in a measure the capacity which distinguished the earlier nations. We can not accept the assumption of this mental retroversion which looks with averted eyes into the dead past for the greatest light and the highest wisdom. Only such souls as yet linger in the retreating shadows of the old night, whose "holy of holies" is an antiquarian museum—the worshipers of mere forms and lifeless relics instead of vital principles and living ideas—find that, to such a degree,

"Distance lends enchantment to the view,"

that they are only too happy to discount the intelligence of their own times. That the ancient Magi did know much

more about divination and revelation than our people are likely to learn from the modern pulpit, there can be no doubt in the minds of intelligent readers. But Dr. Samson is not authorized to estimate the acquired knowledge and to measure the innate capacity of all his contemporaries by the limits of his own individual standard. I do not lose sight of the fact that the learned Doctor has been at the head of the University ; but I am also reminded that there have been many eminent schoolmasters who never had an idea beyond what was printed in the accepted class-books. If Cowper's description is severe, we can scarcely question the justice of its application to such teachers of learned ignorance :

“ For such is all the mental food purveyed
By public hackneys in the schooling trade ;
Who feed a pupil's intellect with store
Of syntax, truly, but with little more.”

Men whose minds are of common mold generally tumble into a rut in youth or during their college days. If it is a theological groove, they seldom get out of it ; but, as a rule, continue to run round and round in their own small circle to the end of time. When such men venture to pass judgment on subjects outside of the limits of their little periphery, they are sure to expose their ignorance. This is a matter of very common observation whenever they meddle with metaphysical and spiritual questions. Men of this class generally believe in a God who has lost the power of speech, or for other reasons has determined to say nothing more to mankind in this world—the sacred canon having been filled up and closed eighteen hundred years ago—otherwise they might hear from

him as "the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind," saying, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Is it to be supposed that God and his angels (messengers), after having freely spoken to the Jews for centuries, have declared non-intercourse forever with the rest of mankind? This is the dogmatic assumption of the Evangelical Churches; and for this reason, especially, they declare all the alleged spiritual revelations of modern times, and all communications made to the heathen world in all ages, as vile impostures, or, at best, the result of an unlawful intercourse with the invisible world.

Strange to say, the Rev. Dr. Samson really exalts the Fox Sisters to a very high place in scientific annals. Those ladies will be surprised to learn, for the first time, that they are permitted to take rank with such men as Professor Morse and his associates. This appears from the following extract from the report of the Doctor's lecture :

"All phenomena came from natural causes and were governed by natural law. While Morse was making electricity carry living words over dead substances, the Fox Sisters, by the nervous forces of their bodies, were rapping answers to questions which their visitors already knew. In neither case was there anything supernaturally performed."

Of course there was nothing supernatural to the mind that has an extended view and a rational judgment of the vast extent and immeasurable resources of Nature. But it is to be observed that while Professor Morse, as the practical exponent of science, was sending his messages over the wires, the three Sisters and many others were doing what no physical scientist or material philosopher has yet been able to do, namely, they were rapping out communications—often *on the*

walls and ceilings far above their own heads—without either battery or any of the instrumentalities of the telegraphic art. With no knowledge of the laws which govern the subtle agents ; without scholastic training of any kind, they puzzled all the scientists by producing—without electrical, mechanical or other instruments—results more remarkable than they were able to accomplish with all their professional aids and scientific accessories, of zinc and copper-plates, acids in many cups, long poles with glass insulators, galvanized wires and other telegraphic instruments.

Now the Fox Sisters knew no more about the dynamics of vital and spiritual forces than they did of the Sanskrit language. Yet, according to this learned Doctor of the Modern School of Divinity, they were able to produce explosive discharges of nerve force in regular succession, and in such a manner as to embody and express the thoughts of some foreign intelligence to the Doctor unknown. If the rappings and moving of ponderable bodies are all produced by a disruptive discharge of vital electricity, or “the nervous forces” of the human body, why may not Dr. Samson and the School of Modern Scientists give us at once the demonstration of their theory? Have Doctors of Divinity no “nervous forces” at their command, or do the scientists lack the ability to use the small artillery of their masked batteries? And why do the electricians neglect to employ their discharging instruments, when they might touch themselves off, and thus explode the magazines of “nervous forces” in the rest of mankind? What weak women and little children are doing daily, these scientists ought to perform without difficulty. Gentlemen, if

all the elements, agents and forces required in the production of these phenomena reside in the human body, and are at the disposal of every frail medium, surely those who adopt this view have no rational excuse for neglecting the demonstration of their hypothesis for a single hour. Such an *experimentum crucis* might be of no little consequence in some of our fossilized institutions, where the revelation of even a galvanic semblance of the true spiritual life of man would afford some relief, especially to those who have been waiting long and anxiously for something to revive their dying hopes.

I will extract another brief passage from the *Herald's* report, and this will sufficiently indicate the only remaining point in Dr. Samson's discourse which is worthy of comment in this connection :

“ In closing, the speaker said there are three classes of manifestations belonging to modern Spiritualism. First, table rapping ; second, medium writing ; third, mind reading. It was established beyond all doubt that a ‘ subject ’ never told what the medium did not know, or *vice versa*. Nothing came to a man's mind that he did not know before. He merely reported what was before known.”

It needs no long acquaintance with spiritual phenomena, or any attainments beyond the most superficial knowledge of the subject, to enable one to make the discovery that Rev. Dr. Samson's classification of the phenomena is not only wholly incomplete, but that it is destitute of the slightest aspect of a scientific method of mind, philosophical discrimination, or even a capacity for something like precision of statement. The bold assumption that the Spirits never communicate any fact, occurrence or information not previously known to either the medium or the investigator flatly contradicts the actual

experience of thousands. The people are neither so ignorant as their teachers imagine, nor so blind to the new evidences of their immortality. They are no longer governed by the priesthood. The press is now the chief instrumentality in fashioning popular thought, and few to-day, in Protestant Christendom, are disposed to accept any dogma that contradicts their personal experience.

The new age means freedom of thought on all the great questions which involve the present and future interests of mankind. The world is quick with spiritual life, and divine ministers touch the sensitive souls of the living. The poet had the ancients in view when he said,

“ The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.”

This may be true of the oracles of Greece and Rome, but living souls never die, nor have they lost the power of speech. Paralysis is not epidemic in heaven. The deathless oracles that come to quicken our faith and inspire new and diviner hopes in this material age, do not speak here and there from some temple dedicated to the gods, but in a million households all over the civilized world ! The assertion that they never tell us any thing we did not know before, is not true. In charity, however, we must presume that Dr. Samson honestly entertains the opinion he expressed. And yet the present writer could easily fill twenty-five columns with demonstrative proofs to the contrary, all so clearly authenticated as to satisfy any candid and rational inquirer. This constant effort on the part of many saints and *savants* to conceal the real facts,

to dispute the magnitude of the movement, and to belittle the whole subject, does not appear to check the progress of Spiritualism. The truth is, it only shakes the confidence of the people in the assumed infallibility of their blind guides.

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, }
 NEW YORK, *March*, 1880. }

HISTORIC PAPER.—In 1853—some twenty-nine years ago—the writer prepared a Memorial addressed to the United States Senate, asking for the appointment of a Scientific Commissioner to investigate the Spiritual Manifestations. This document was signed by 13,000 American citizens. With the names attached, it was two hundred feet long. For convenience in handling, it was backed with muslin, handsomely bound, and mounted on a cylinder. In April, 1854, the Memorial was presented to the Senate by Hon. James Shields, of Illinois, in a characteristic speech of considerable length, and in which the General said :

“ I have now given a faithful synopsis of this petition, which, however unprecedented in itself, has been prepared with singular ability, presenting the subject with great delicacy and moderation.”

After some discussion respecting its reference to a special committee, the Memorial was, on motion of Senator Mason, ordered to lie on the table ; and it now remains in the archives at Washington.

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

PROF. HENRY KIDDLE AND HIS CRITICS.

FROM THE NEW YORK DAILY TRIBUNE.*

Following the Example of Judge Edmonds—Free Thought and Moral Courage—Resignation of the Superintendent of Schools Suggested—A Blow at Religious Liberty—Hypocrisy Strains at the Gnat—Gross Injustice of the Opposition—Mr. Kiddle Defends his Book—Experience Matures the Judgment—Views of the Ancient Philosophers—Important Ground of Argument—Necessary Imperfections of Mediumship—Intelligence Limited to the Measure of its Instruments—The Law of Universal Expression—Cavilers Wrangle while Philosophers Reason.

To the Editor of the Tribune :

SIR : Since the announcement of the conversion of the late Hon. John W. Edmonds to Spiritualism in 1852 startled the religious community, and so alarmed the Judiciary Convention that his just claims to the Supreme Court Judgeship were sacrificed to the popular prejudice, no new convert has so deeply stirred the public mind as Mr. Henry Kiddle, Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction in this city. Following the example of Judge Edmonds, Mr. Kiddle has published a book, in which he has fearlessly related his personal experience and the results of his investigation, without any attempt to make the facts acceptable to those who prefer their own preconceived opinions to the un-

* This letter was published just before the work of the Editor-at-Large was formally inaugurated ; but it may very properly have a place in this connection, since—in every essential sense—it belongs to the Secular Press Bureau Correspondence.

popular truth. Mr. Kiddle enters into no league with the enemies of Spiritualism. His manly independence is eminently worthy of imitation ; and this, at least, should command universal respect.

The question of the necessity or propriety of Mr. Kiddle's resignation or removal has been raised, and that question has been sustained in certain quarters, when it should have been denounced as an outrage against the most sacred rights and privileges of the individual. Why should Mr. Kiddle be required to resign the office he has filled with so much ability ? What has he ever done, or left undone, that he should be removed from a position in which all agree that he has served the public with the utmost fidelity ? It is impossible to disguise the animus which prompts all similar suggestions. It being settled, on evidence that will not be disputed, that he is still perfectly able rightly to discharge his duties, how is the Superintendent disqualified ? In the names of Reason, Liberty and Justice, I respectfully demand a statement of the reasons why this gross injustice is practiced toward Spiritualists ? How long shall this unmeasured insolence be tolerated by a great people, that probably to-day outnumbers any religious community in the country ? It is to be observed that a man may believe almost anything else, however absurd and monstrous, and yet saintly hypocrites and journalistic time-servers will never intimate that his views unfit him for situations of public responsibility. He may make Milton's majestic devil a corner stone of his religious faith ; he may embrace legions of little devils whose function it is to torture the souls of men, women, and little children forever ; he may even

worship a God who, from the foundation of the world, pre-ordained the eternal damnation of the larger part of his own offspring !

All this, and other nameless abominations, one is at liberty to believe, and not a Scribe or Pharisee who profits by "the mammon of unrighteousness," or otherwise sells his soul to Satan, will ever suspect that his mind is enfeebled, or that his religious opinions can disqualify him for any official position, either in Church or State ! Nor is this all ; he is quite likely to be regarded as preëminently qualified to superintend the education of our children ! O, ye hypocrites ! ye strain at a gnat and swallow a nest of scorpions !

Mr. Kiddle endeavors to justify the claims of his book from internal and other evidence. In the enthusiasm of his first love he does not question the reputed authorship of the communications he has received. The method by which he essays to excuse the logical, rhetorical and other defects, shows at once remarkable sincerity of purpose, little knowledge of the laws governing spiritual phenomena, and a want of that mature judgment which is developed by long experience and a profound study of the facts and principles of psychological science. The present writer is not prepared to entertain the idea that the next life is a state of vacuity and retrogression ; or that the other world is a mere asylum for dreamers, drivellers and dotards. Nor do the facts of Spiritualism, or Mr. Kiddle's experience, afford any warrant for such a conclusion.

" The great intelligences fair,
That range above our mortal state—
In circle round the blessed gate,"

have neither lost their power of thought nor expression. The greatest philosophers of antiquity viewed death as an honorable promotion. The apotheosis elevated the mortal to the sphere and society of the gods. While this is not presumed to be the absolute fact, the idea is true in some qualified sense. All the faculties and affections are refined and exalted by contact with more subtle principles, nobler natures, and the inspiring atmosphere of the immortal life and world.

I have not yet had an opportunity to look into Mr. Kiddle's book beyond the perusal of the extracts which have appeared in the city papers, and for this reason am not prepared to express a confident judgment of its merits. One need not be greatly surprised, however, to find that he has over-estimated the intrinsic value of its contents. As a rule the new convert, however intelligent, has more heat than light. Fervent feeling is liable to render him less critical in the observation of facts and the analysis of evidence ; at the same time intense desire, like every passion of the mind, is liable to obscure reason and warp the judgment.

Mr. Kiddle touches one of the grounds of argument which he has not sufficiently turned to his own account in dealing with his critics. I refer to *the obvious limitations imposed by the laws of mediumship*. So long as the individualized intelligence—either in this world or any other—must find expression through mediums of whatsoever nature or kind, the results will not and cannot depend alone on the intelligence of the speaker or actor ; but always—in a greater or less degree—on the innate capacity and proper adaptation of the instruments employed. A gallon measure will under no circumstances

hold over four quarts. Filling it from the ocean instead of a bucket does not increase its capacity in the smallest degree. Minds are receptacles of human knowledge and inspired ideas ; but they all have their limits, and no human power or divine agency, ever experimentally illustrated in our presence, can cram the mind beyond the utmost limit of its capacity. What if God be the infinite source of our inspiration ; humanity is still subject to its own limitations. You may as well attempt to pour the whole Hudson River through a ten-inch stovepipe as undertake to force the profound ideas of Socrates, Plato, Shakespeare, Webster, and other great minds, to an adequate expression through the feeble brain of a weak woman or a little child. It is immaterial who blows, and no matter how hard, you can never wake a bugle-blast with a penny trumpet. The enemies of Spiritualism are not disposed to recognize this necessary dependence of the operator on his instruments, and yet the truth is self-evident. All men, even in this world, are obliged to depend on appropriate instruments for the adequate expression of what they feel, and think, and know. The mere disputant doubts and wrangles ; but it is the province of the philosopher to reason.

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, NEW YORK.

OPPOSITION IN THE PROVINCES.

“ STRIKE, BUT HEAR ! ” *

FROM THE TORONTO (CANADA) MAIL, MARCH 29, 1880.

Freedom of Speech and an Honest Judgment—Sergeant Cox—Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S.—Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S.—Testimony of Eminent Authors and Distinguished Scientists—William Howitt—Professor Varley—W. Stainton Moses, M.A., of the University College, London—George Sexton, LL.D.—The German Professors—Fechner, Fichte, Zöllner, and Ulrici—Men who are Treated as Lunatics—The Jugglers and Counterfeiters—Misrepresentations of the Press—Spirit of an English Poet—The Horoscope of his Country—The Prophetic Problem—The Question of the Ages—Southey's Death on Earth and Birth in Spirit—Life—Highly Poetic Description—Conclusion.

To the Editor of the Mail :

SIR : I am in receipt of a marked copy of your paper of the 13th ultimo, in which my attention is called to your editorial on “ Modern Spiritualism.” Your liberal motto from the eloquent Burke, encourages the presumption that you may be willing that all classes of people and every phase

* The publication of this letter in the *Toronto Mail* was accompanied by a very lengthy editorial in a modified and thoroughly respectful tone. In this case we had incidental evidence of the utility of the Secular Press Bureau. The first intimation the writer received that his article had appeared, was a letter from an intelligent gentleman in Canada, who stated in substance that he had read our correspondence in the Government Organ ; that until then he had supposed Modern Spiritualism to be unworthy of serious consideration ; but that the perusal of this single letter had changed his mind. This correspondent further solicited advice as to the particular books he should read to obtain a general knowledge of the subject, and subsequently sent us his order for the same.

of public thought and opinion should be fairly represented in your columns. That you can have any possible interest in suppressing the views now so widely entertained among all civilized nations, I am not authorized to infer; nor am I prepared to believe—in the absence of decisive evidence—that you are disposed to arraign many of the ablest men in England, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Spain, and the United States, on a charge of being deficient in either ordinary discrimination, intelligence, or integrity, without admitting them to a hearing. I therefore respectfully invite your attention to the contents of this letter, and trust you will be kind enough to submit to the readers of *The Mail* the observations elicited by your strictures on the subject.

You are pleased to characterize Modern Spiritualism as “the most pretentious fraud of the time,” and express surprise that “Sergeant Cox—a man with legal training and occupying a judicial position—could have been led astray.” You find another “similar conundrum” in the case of Professor William Crookes, F.R.S., the veteran editor of the London *Journal of Science*. When you speak of Spiritualism as “a fraud,” you implicate many honest people. Distinguished lords and ladies, many members of the English aristocracy, eminent authors and scientists of world-wide reputation, all fall under this sweeping judgment. Where is the evidence, allow me to ask, that Edward William Cox, Professors Crookes, Wallace and Varley, the late William Howitt, W. Stainton Moses, M.A., of the University College, London, George Sexton, LL.D., also of England, and a host of the *literati* among English speaking peoples, have all been engaged in a stu-

pendous and heartless fraud? I know of no such evidence; and I desire to make my record of views which seem to me to be, not only more honorable to those gentlemen, but to human nature. Again, what proof is there that such honored names as Fechner, Fichte, Zöllner and Ulrici, of Germany, have come down from their high places in the temple of Science to practice as common jugglers for the amusement of idlers, and to torture the sorrowing hearts of bereaved humanity? Does any reasonable man believe that they are capable of this shameless mockery of our purest loves; this infamous desecration of the most sacred memories of the departed; this wicked crucifixion of our immortal hopes? No; never! This assumption is far more incredible than any facts which Spiritualism offers for our contemplation. Assume anything within the wide realm of probabilities, and we will try to entertain the hypothesis; but this aimless sacrifice of noble reputations, personal honor, the supremacy of reason, and this unprovoked trampling on bleeding hearts—this is too much; it is manifestly impossible!

You admit that the persons you have been pleased to name are intellectual men; that they are “shrewd and acute in power of observation,” and that “no exposure seems to shake their faith” in the essential facts and fundamental principles of Spiritualism. And is there nothing in all this to suggest the probability that you may be mistaken in your judgment? Few daily journalists find time to make so careful an examination of the subject as Sergeant Cox, Professors Crookes, Wallace, Varley and many other scientists and philosophers have done. If you have not been able to command similar

opportunities, may I respectfully inquire if you are prepared to pronounce an adverse judgment, regardless of the significant facts they have observed, and the conclusions to which they have arrived by a long and patient course of investigation ?

The fact that cunning jugglers are able to so imitate the spiritual phenomena, that only sharp experts may detect the difference, does nothing to unsettle the faith of the rational believer in their actual occurrence. The counterfeit does not disprove the reality of the thing imitated ; but, on the contrary, it furnishes *prima facie* evidence of its existence. Nor does the inability to detect a forgery ever warrant the conclusion that those who thus fail as detectives are either to be regarded as accomplices of the criminal, or as wanting in a fair share of ordinary intelligence.

Permit me to add, in this connection, that you make a great mistake when you represent the manifestations by the Spirits as being of no possible value, and “their communications as trivial and useless.” This indicates—pardon my frankness—that your observations have been chiefly confined to fraudulent imitations, and that the more important of the real facts and communications have not yet come within the sphere of your limited observation. The secular papers often select specimens of doggerel, which they publish to illustrate the intellectual degeneracy of the communicating spirits, and seemingly with a view to prejudice their readers against the whole subject. This course of misrepresentation fosters an unhealthy public sentiment ; and I can in no way more effectually dispose of the assumption that the communications are either all meaningless or otherwise worthless, than

by offering some illustrative examples. The following are fragments from prophetic utterances—given in 1856—by the spirit of an English poet, who thus ostensibly shows us the horoscope of his country :

* * * * *

“ The huge fierce serpent Bankruptcy devours
 The nation’s wealth ; when commerce flies the Thames
 And the great steamers crowd the docks no more ;
 And Parliament breaks up, while anarchy
 Bursts like a conflagration from the deep
 Fire damps of squalid want ; when harvests fail,
 And three cold summers rot the standing corn ;
 When Manchester and Birmingham consume
 First wealth, then credit, and then close their doors,
 While like an inundation pour the streams
 Of hungry operatives through the streets ;
 Let those fly to the mountains—where on high
 Throned Independence waves her flag of stars—
 Who prize home quiet, peace and blessed love ;
 For, surely as the living God endures,
 The day of England’s ruin draweth nigh ;
 These signs her desolation go before.

Alas, Napoleon thought himself most wise,
 When, taking to his arms an Austrian wife,
 He plunged his armies in the Russian snows.
 The Angel of the North, who sits above
 The hyperborean realm, with wintry smile,
 Gazed on that host : they slept, they woke no more.
 ’Tis thus with England—she has dug her grave ;
 The blood of all her martyrs unavenged,
 All patriots murdered by the Second Charles,
 All freemen slaughtered in America,
 And slain like sheep through trampled Hindostan,
 All wrongs against all people she has wronged,
 Like the returning tide, arise and dash
 Against her shivering, creaking, rotten State ;—
 America shall be her sole defense.

O England, I have loved thee, as a babe
 The breast it sucks, and love thee still ; thou art
 A double Empire—huge and terrible,
 Yet sweet as Indian airs from citron groves,
 Blown o'er by amorous winds—a double State.
 Millions of rotting hearts, corrupt and foul
 With every sin that brutalizes man ;
 Millions of sterling hearts, good loyal souls,
 True to the right, though ignorant, are thine.

* * * * *

O England, rise,
 And purge from off thy soul the clotted stains ;
 Thy sins against Humanity abjure,
 While yet delivering mercy pleads for thee.

He who sows nettles reaps a crop of stings.
 Hatch serpents and they bite. Trust fools with fire
 And palaces are tinder. Every wrong
 Brings its own vengeance. Every right makes right.
 Had Bonaparte not plunged in Russian snows
 He would not have gone down at Waterloo.
 Crises occur in every nation's fate—
 Two pathways open to as different ends
 As death from life, and gladness from despair,
 Or fame from infamy. Now England stands
 At the dividing of the roads. Her last
 Redeeming opportunity has come.
 God will arouse her starved and beaten serfs,
 And through them revolutionize the State,
 And a new Freedom build above the tomb
 Of her existing order, huge and old,
 Which has a name to live, yet lives no more."

* * * * *

The foregoing extracts are passages of only average merit from the composite utterance of several deceased English bards, in a work extending to ten thousand lines. In all some thirty thousand lines have been given through the same medium, and with a rapidity only limited by the capacity of the

reporter to follow the inspired speaker. It is not my purpose to subject the lines quoted to trial by the accepted rules of poetic art ; I do not propose to analyze the prophetic elements which here find such emphatic expression ; nor shall I inquire whether it is probable that the prophecies of the Spirits will ever be verified by the national experience, and thus become a part of the history of a great people. We can wait for the stern logic of events to furnish the solution of the prophetic problem. But it will never do to characterize this as mere twaddle or senseless verbiage. The words of the immortalized poet are not meaningless. On the contrary, the spirit expresses his view of coming events with such clearness and force that it is quite impossible to misapprehend or disguise his meaning.

The great question of all ages has been, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Surely spiritual communications are never "trivial and useless," if in the light of the same this great problem finds a solution in evidence which amounts to demonstration. As a further illustration of the injustice of those secular papers which assume to discover nothing but "stale platitudes" and "spiritual drivel," I will offer Robert Southey's description of his departure from the sphere of mortal life and his entrance into the Spirit-World. It will be remembered that the light of the poet's genius was obscured some time before his death. The gloom in which his mind wandered in his last years ; the confused sensations, broken and uncertain consciousness, while the spirit's mortal instrument was unstrung, are all expressed with great delicacy and poetic effect in the following poem :

THE SPIRIT-BORN.

“ Night overtook me ere my race was run,
 And Mind, which is the chariot of the Soul,
 Whose wheels revolve in radiance like the sun,
 And utter glorious music, as they roll
 To the eternal goal,
 With sudden shock stood still. I heard the boom
 Of thunders ; many cataracts seemed to pour
 From the invisible mountains ; through the gloom
 Flowed the great waters ; then I knew no more
 But this, that Thought was o'er.

“ As one who, drowning, feels his anguish cease,
 And clasps his doom, a pale but gentle bride,
 And gives his soul to slumber and sweet peace,
 Yet thrills when living shapes the waves divide,
 And moveth with the tide.
 So sinking deep beneath the unknown sea
 Of intellectual sleep, I rested there ;
 I knew I was not dead, though soon to be,
 But still alive to love, to loving care,
 To sunshine and to prayer.

“ And Life, and Death, and Immortality,
 Each of my being held a separate part ;
 Life there as sap within an o'erblown tree ;
 Death there as frost, with intermitting smart ;
 But in the secret heart
 The sense of immortality, the breath
 Of being indestructible, the trust
 In Christ, of final triumph over death,
 And spiritual blossoming from dust,
 And Heaven with all the just.

“ The Soul, like some sweet flower-bud yet unblown,
 Lay tranced in beauty in its silent cell ;
 The Spirit slept, but dreamed of worlds unknown,
 As dreams the chrysalis within its shell,
 Ere Summer breathes her spell.

But slumber grew more deep till morning broke,
 The Sabbath morning of the holy skies,
 An Angel touched my eyelids and I woke,
 A voice of tenderest love said, 'Spirit, rise'—
 I lifted up mine eyes,

“And lo! I was in Paradise. The beams
 Of morning shone o'er landscapes green and gold,
 O'er trees with star-like clusters, o'er the streams
 Of crystal, and o'er many a tented fold.
 A Patriarch—as of old
 Melchisedec might have approached a guest—
 Drew near me, as in reverent awe I bent,
 And bade me welcome to the Land of Rest,
 And led me upward, wondering but content,
 Into his milk-white tent.”

The writer of this letter has no merely personal object to achieve or private interest to serve. Surely, the simple truth, in respect to so grave a subject, is important to all who would comprehend the higher faculties and relations of the human mind, and the sublime possibilities of the future life. Trusting that you will cordially submit what I have written to the judgment of your readers, I am, Sir,

Yours truly,

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, }
 NEW YORK, *March 23, 1880.* }

SCIENCE VERSUS DOGMATISM.

REVIEW OF PROF. WUNDT'S LETTER.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

Progress of Spiritualism in Germany—*Amour propre* of American Scientists—Prof. Wundt's Apprehensions—What Constitutes a Scientific Authority—Disqualified by his own Standard—Youmans on Scientific Ignorance—Where are the Magnets?—The Sleeve-gammon Hypothesis—Comparison of the Facts with the Law—Wundt Waging War on his Principles—Limits of the Leipzig Professor—Comprehensive Views of Nature—Supernaturalism a Solecism—Natural Laws never Suspended—Illustrations from Nature—Diversity of Forms and Phenomena—Foundations of Natural Science—The Everlasting Drift—Perpetual Change of Conditions—Law of the Rock, the Tree and the Fish—The Wild-goose Higher Law—Voluntary Powers of Man—Power of Mind over Matter—Attitude of Spiritualism Misrepresented—Arrogance of Modern Scientists Rebuked—The Fields of Observation—The Psychology of the Future.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

YOUR readers have already been informed that those eminent Professors, Fichte and Ulrici, of Germany, having investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism in the presence and through the mediumship of Mr. Henry Slade and others, at length cordially accepted the theory which ascribes the genuine facts to the presence and agency of departed human beings. The announcement of the conversion of these venerable scientific philosophers has occasioned no little interest and discussion in the educated circles of Europe and America. Among the German philosophical leaders of the opposition is Prof. W. Wundt, chief lecturer on Natural Philosophy in the University of Leipzig. I am reminded

that his recent letter to Ulrici, the philosopher of Halle, has already received appropriate treatment at your hands, but it may not be out of place for me to make some further observations on the views expressed by the German Professor.

In the treatment of Spiritualism our American scientists, as a rule, have betrayed a certain *amour propre* which is far more conspicuous than their love of truth and fair dealing. Among the scientific and literary classes of England, and before the professors in European Universities, the subject has occasionally been treated in a more rational and scientific spirit. Of the large class who are still unable to discover anything in Spiritualism but jugglery and delusion, perhaps Prof. Wundt may be regarded as one of the most considerate and respectful representatives. He admits that the phenomena are *objective* in the ordinary sense of the word; and he agrees with Prof. Ulrici, that if we presuppose the reality of the facts, "the consequences which follow them for our general view of the world," are of paramount importance. He entertains the notion that the lifting of tables and other ponderable bodies, in the manner described, would indicate an infringement of the laws of physical nature; and that such alleged facts, if we admit their reality, suggest at least the unpleasant possibility of some "deeper disturbance of general natural laws." The mind of the learned professor seems to be haunted by a startling apprehension of "the philosophical consequences to which the reality of the Spiritualistic phenomena would force us." All such apprehensions are mere phantoms of the imagination, born of either childish ignorance or popular skepticism; and we may reasonably

conclude that they are never likely to disturb the mind of the profound philosopher.

It is worthy of remark that the criteria set up by Prof. Wundt, and the personal qualifications which he declares to be requisite to constitute a man an authority in science, are fatal to the empty pretensions of all those scientists who assume the right to express the most confident opinions respecting the Spiritual Phenomena. In the beginning of his article the Professor determines his own incompetency as a judge of spiritual things in explicit terms as follows :

“ But the highest degree of credibility is not sufficient to make any man a scientific authority ; there is requisite to this a special professional, and in most cases indeed a technical training, which must have approved itself by superior accomplishments in the province concerned. He who has not acquired this professional and technical culture by long years of severe labor is neither capable of achieving anything himself nor of judging the works of others.”

As all this is strictly true, it follows, by necessary sequence, that Prof. Wundt is not qualified to express an opinion respecting the essential nature and proper significance of Spiritual Phenomena, nor is he the authority to fix arbitrary limits to the broad field of scientific research. We may put his own confession in evidence that he has had no “ special professional and . . . technical training ” in this department. True, his translator affirms that “ He is . . . perhaps the most eminent psychologist in Germany.” Impossible ! Psychology is the formulated knowledge of the faculties, susceptibilities and functions of the human spirit. How then can a man be eminent in the science which comprehends the inherent powers of the soul, its higher relations and immeasurable capabil-

ities, when he does not even know that man has any possible existence separate from the corporeal body? Why, he cannot distinguish the functions of an invisible spiritual being from the tricks of a mere juggler. To assume that such a man is an eminent psychologist is to disregard the meaning of terms and to trifle with a grave subject.

Prof. Wundt further maintains that the men whose observations have been confined to the phenomena of the physical world, "whatever department of natural science they may have been engaged in," are incompetent to grapple with the more subtle principles and intricate problems of Spiritualism. Had this judgment governed his conduct he would never have meddled with the subject, and the present writer would have found no occasion to review the unphilosophical assumptions of a man whose ignorance of the more important facts and essential principles of Spiritualism is at once self-confessed and self-evident.

But this incapacity to deal with the subject intelligently did not deter Prof. Wundt from committing the same blunder which other scientists had made before him, each in turn having put on record *what he did not know* about the one subject of highest importance to mankind. The self-conceit of such men and the dogmatic spirit which strives with desperate energy to maintain its hold upon the common mind, prevents their remaining silent until they are better informed; and so, one after another, they advertise their ignorance before the world, in the leading foreign and American journals, including the *Popular Science Monthly*, whose editor dignifies such a display of ignorance and incompetency by calling it science!

The crudest cogitations of almost any materialistic writer against Spiritualism will command recognition in the presence of Professor Youmans, while no man, however competent to enlighten the public mind, can be heard in its defense. In his opinion the only scientific view of the subject is that which ascribes all the facts to the jugglery of the so-called mediums, and the growing faith of multitudes in every part of the world who yield to the contagion of popular delusions.

It is well known that among the phases of spiritual phenomena ponderable bodies are often raised and supported in the air when it is impossible to discover the cause of motion within the domain of physics. In such cases the exponents of scientific materialism insist that there must be concealed physical causes. Professor Wundt presumes that Dr. Slade had prepared himself for experiments on the magnetic needle by having concealed magnets about his person. The absurdity of this presumption must be sufficiently apparent to any ordinary observer. Undoubtedly the same power that moved the needle in his presence also moved the table, chairs, and other objects. Let us see how this scientific (?) hypothesis will appear in its application to the moving of ponderable bodies. The magnet draws such other bodies to itself, *in a right line*, as are subject to the law of its attraction; but it does not, at the same time, send them spinning in an opposite direction. It never gives to the objects moved either a rotary motion around the centripetal point of attraction, an undulatory, zigzag or other eccentric movement. But in the spiritual circle ponderable objects as readily move from as toward the medium; indeed, they move in all possible directions.

The utter absurdity of the hypothetical assumption of magnets concealed in "the coat-sleeves of the medium," or elsewhere, will be still more manifest if we consider the fact that the body attracted by a magnet can only move in a direct line along the plane between the central point of attraction and the body thus acted upon. In the circle the objects moved do not obey this law. On the contrary, they constantly deviate from that line, and often rise from that plane several feet above the head of the medium. And pray where is the magnetic center of attraction—in what does it inhere—when the medium himself, with everything upon his person, becomes an object of such levitation?

It will be perceived that Prof. Wundt does not even respect the physical laws in his lame attempt to dispose of the Spiritual Phenomena. While he contends for the supremacy of the laws of matter he yet disregards the essential principles of the system of Natural Philosophy, the chair of which he occupies in the Leipzig University. While he has only the most unworthy and false conceptions of the nature and claims of Spiritualism, his views of physical nature seem to be limited to the narrow field of his own observations. He has no idea that Spiritualism is compatible with the laws of Nature; and he evidently imagines that if our more important facts were demonstrated to be true we could no longer depend upon the sublime natural order of the Universe. I copy a passage to show the wild drift and shallow speculation of this material philosopher:

"All the methods of natural science rest upon the presupposition of an unchangeable order of occurrence, which presupposition involves the

other, that everywhere, where the same conditions are given, the results must also agree. The naturalist, therefore, proceeds in his observations with unshakable confidence in the positiveness of his objects. Nature cannot deceive him : there rules in nature neither freak nor accident. You will admit that we cannot speak of a regularity of this sort in the domain of spiritualistic phenomena ; on the contrary, the most conspicuous characteristic of these lies precisely in the fact that in their presence the laws of nature seem to be abrogated." . . . " The laws of gravitation, of electricity, of light and of heat, are altogether, as we are assured, of a purely hypothetical validity ; they have authority as long as the inexplicable spiritualistic something does not cross them. . . . An authority which asserts this demands more than a scientific authority has ever demanded ; it demands that natural Science shall abandon the pre-supposition of a universal causality." . . .

This is a total misrepresentation of the attitude which a rational Spiritualism assumes in respect to the laws of physical nature and the proper claims of modern Science. We cordially accept the idea of the " unchangeable order of occurrence " throughout the natural world. We insist upon it as a fundamental principle of our philosophy, which embraces the nature and relations of all things material and spiritual. We can see nothing in the phenomena of Spiritualism at war with this undeviating action of law and this uniform " order of occurrence " on which Prof. Wundt rests his faith, and Science rears her superstructure. But the Leipzig Professor's observations, in his own little field, cannot be supposed to determine the utmost limits of Nature. While the reality of the Spiritual Phenomena is no more a question of faith with the writer, but one long ago settled by the possession of positive knowledge, I have still no idea that any law of Nature was ever suspended for a moment. The alleged events which in popular parlance, have been characterized as '*miraculous*,

even so far as they are real, involve no such infringement of the laws of the natural world. Our modern scientists, including Prof. W. Wundt, entertain an opposite opinion, and are hence obliged to dispute the occurrence of the facts and to reject all affirmative human testimony.

In our attempts to reason with these scientific opposers of Spiritualism, a mutual understanding, as to the sense in which terms are to be employed, seems to be prerequisite. In the judgment of the enlightened Spiritualist, Nature is not limited to the recognized elements and forms of matter. *It includes the soul as well as the body of things. The invisible forces and laws which operate in the production of sentient beings, with all the faculties of organic formation, life, sensation and thought, belong to Nature. Hence the voluntary functions of animal and human existence ; the powers of the mind in its loftiest moods, and whatever else belongs to the constitution and relations of the soul, are clearly embraced in this grand economy of Nature.* Granting that not only all the elements and forms of matter, however ponderable or imponderable, but also all the gradations of intelligent existence on the earth, however exalted in character and Godlike in power, really belong to Nature, it will at once appear that the most extraordinary phenomena, depending upon the relations of mind and matter, cease to be *supernatural*. It is only to accommodate our ignorance of the superior departments of Nature that such a word has found a temporary place in our vocabulary. Certain occurrences may be said to be *preternatural* in the sense of being out of the regular course of events, or beyond the scope of the ordinary operations of Nature ; but no event that ever

transpired on earth can be properly said to be *supernatural* or *miraculous*, in the sense that involves a suspension of the natural laws. By using such terms in their theological acceptance our scientists disclose the fact that their philosophy of Nature—if they have any—has not yet displaced in their minds the dogmatic assumptions of early religious teachers.

Professor Wundt assumes that in the ordinary fields of scientific research with which he is familiar, the same results may be reproduced as often as the same natural principles, conditions and agents are combined for their production; and he further affirms that no such uniform results can be obtained in the investigation of Spiritual Phenomena. This mistake results from the Professor's too limited observation and superficial thought. It is certain that like causes produce like effects in every department of Nature, from the highest to the lowest. The world of mind is subject to this law, and our sphere of moral observation offers no exception to this rule. The student of spiritual science may find it more difficult to reproduce the precise conditions, visible and invisible, which, on a previous occasion, resulted in the development of a given fact, and for the obvious reason that, some of those conditions belong to another sphere and depend on the voluntary agency of beings whose presence and coöperation we may not always command. Every scientist knows that, as a rule, the more subtile and intangible the agents are with which we have to deal, the more difficult it is to exactly repeat an experiment under precisely the original conditions.

But the terms which Prof. Wundt employs in the expres-

sion of his views indicate a far greater uniformity in the results obtained in ordinary scientific investigations than the facts are believed to warrant. It has been said that Nature never exactly repeats herself. The same natural forces and organic laws are constantly operative in the vegetable kingdom, but the results of their operation present infinite variety. Go into the forest, and examine a thousand trees, and you will find no two alike. More than this, though the leaves on the same tree are of one general type, yet they all vary, more or less, one from another. The same is true in respect to the animal creation and man. The children of the same family are so unlike their parents and one another that each admits of instant recognition ; and even among the hundreds of millions of human beings who occupy the earth we readily distinguish the separate individualities. The same meteorological laws are in constant operation, but the effects are endlessly diversified. We never have two storms in all respects alike. The white cumuli of a summer day, through which the Sun pours a flood of light that bathes the heavens in golden and purple glories, are never the same two days in the year. Their momentary aspects are fleeting as the shadow of a dream—so evanescent that while we yet gaze at their aërial forms they vanish never to return.

As physical science is founded on natural objects, their relations to time, space and each other, and the ever-varying phenomena of their existence, it follows of necessity that outside of the several branches of mathematics the scientist must inevitably meet with a similar variety of objects, phenomena and results in all his investigations. Exactly the same results

may not be obtained in any two experiments, for the reason that it may be out of our power to reproduce precisely the same conditions. To obtain the more difficult results in chemistry requires at once a profound knowledge of its principles, the utmost care in their application, and the most skillful manipulation. The same person may occupy, as nearly as possible, the same position before the camera while he has one hundred photographic negatives taken, and yet no two pictures will be precisely alike. The truth is, conditions which may not be cognizable by the careless observer are changing momentarily. The passing emotions of the mind continually modify the expression of the countenance, while invisible atmospheric and molecular changes produce their electro-chemical effects on the sensitive surface that receives the image. No man can be in the same state any two days in his whole life. The conditions of the great globe itself, of all orbs in space, and all forms of being on their surfaces, are changing every moment, and it is not in the power of science to restore to us the conditions of yesterday. The falling sands in the glass; the beating of the human heart; the restless flow of thought and feeling, and the changing aspects of every earthly object—all remind us that we are irresistibly carried along with the everlasting drift of events and circumstances. And thus with the fleeting moments, existing conditions pass away to return no more in their entirety through the endless cycles of eternity!

Let us examine the grounds on which Prof. Wundt assumes that if the spiritual phenomena are admitted to be real he must conclude that "the laws of Nature seem to be abro-

gated." Ponderable bodies are moved without any visible cause of motion, and are mysteriously upheld while they have nothing more tangible than common air to rest upon. If this is really true, the Leipzig Professor of Natural Philosophy presumes that gravitation must be suspended! In the presence of enlightened reason this is neither an inevitable nor a possible conclusion. The learned Professor does not appear to recognize the fact that all forms of matter are not equally subject to the action of the same laws, and that as we ascend from the lower to the higher gradations of being, matter becomes subject to superior laws which only operate in those higher departments of the natural world. I will offer illustrations of this point.

By a law of nature the granite rocks remain imbedded in the everlasting hills, but water finds its way to the surface, and the principal rivers rise among the highest mountains. The old oak on the hillside stretches out its brawny arms to the elements and defies the boreal tempests, while it silently obeys the law of its nature by standing still in the same place while the century comes and goes. The granite and the oak may be removed by human agency, but this does not subvert the recognized principle in statics, and the law of the rock and the tree is never suspended. But the moment we step above the organic plane of vegetable life into the animal kingdom, we discover a power of *voluntary motion* that is superior to the statical law. The beasts of the field and the forest, and all the monsters of the deep, move from place to place as inclination and the necessities of their being may determine. The dead fish floats upon the surface of the stream, indicating at

once the direction and rapidity of the current ; but the live salmon not only swims against the strongest current, but, following the sheet of water, will go up over a fall of twenty feet. Does the genus *salmo* abrogate the laws of Nature? The duck that naturally swims on the surface of the water as naturally—by voluntary effort—dives to the bottom of the stream in search of the means of subsistence. The specific gravity of a wild goose is much greater than that of atmospheric air ; but by a voluntary power the goose resists the terrestrial gravitation, and ascends into the higher strata of the atmosphere. Is any one goose enough to suppose that his flight involves a suspension of the universal force of gravitation ?

The voluntary powers of man are more numerous and of wider scope than those of the inferior creation. The controlling influence of mind over matter is so self-evident that a formal argument to prove it would be a work of supererogation. It is manifest in all the voluntary functions of human nature. The individualized spirit carries around with it in this world a body composed of the same primordial elements which, in a greater or less degree, enter into the chemical composition of all forms of organized being on earth. The power of the human spirit over matter is further manifested in all the forms of beauty and use. A thousand cities teeming with life ; the great navies, commercial marine, and practical industries of all nations, with the innumerable creations of genius in the factories and galleries of the world—all these illustrate the power of mind over matter. This power belongs to the constitution of the human spirit, and upon its

preservation our identity depends. The Spiritual Phenomena clearly prove that none of the natural powers of the soul are lost by the transition to another and more spiritual state of being.

Now if the spirit carries along with it to the supramundane state its capacity to act on and through the elements and forms of matter, by disturbing the imponderables which pervade them or otherwise—and this is clearly demonstrated by the facts—it follows that, under suitable conditions, the invisible spirits of men may raise ponderable bodies, and when they do so, they no more interfere with natural gravitation than the grocer does when he lifts a weight from his counter. The object rises because the spiritual force applied in lifting it is greater than the earth's attraction of the same object. In either case a ponderable body is raised by the application of an intelligent force—spiritual yet natural—which is superior to and hence capable of resisting the physical law of gravitation, which, however, continues to act on that body precisely as before. That is exactly what happens in spiritual circles when heavy bodies cease to obey the earth's attraction. In all this there is nothing either unnatural or miraculous. The laws of physical nature are merely directed or supplemented by the faculties of the human mind. And when venerable professors in European Universities solemnly intimate the abrogation of natural laws as the only way of accounting for such facts, we need not be surprised if the spiritual philosopher loses his gravity with the tables. It can not be true that “the laws of gravitation, of electricity, of light, and of heat are altogether, as we are assured, of a purely hypothetical

character ;" nor did any well-informed Spiritualist ever entertain such a crazy hypothesis over night.

The age is bound to disregard the shallow assumption that all scientific investigation must be restricted to the elements, forms and phenomena of the physical world. We shall make it a part of our business to pull up the stakes which mere physicists have driven down to mark the narrow limits of their conception of the legitimate domain of scientific inquiry. The true friends of science require no dictator to fence in the field, and they will have no arbitrary masters to direct their studies. The irrepressible spirit of the age will override the narrow range of dogmatists, and break down the old landmarks. The arbitrary *dicta* of the bigots in science and theology will be powerless to arrest the world's progress. The new fields which Spiritualism is opening to our observation will be fearlessly explored by those who combine the requisite intellectual ability and moral courage. In this way we shall yet extend the limits of accredited science so far as to embrace the formulated knowledge of the spiritual nature, relations and life of man, here and hereafter. When we shall have realized this result of our labors we may reasonably expect that Psychology—the science of the soul—in the best Universities will be something more and better than a name and a chair.

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, NEW YORK.

THE SPIRITUAL AGITATION.

REV. JOSEPH COOK'S MONDAY LECTURES REVIEWED.

FROM THE BOSTON TRANSCRIPT, MAR. 12, 1880.

Prof. Edwin D. Mead—Rev. Joseph Cook's Lectures—Visions of a Church Minister—Mild Reproofs and Pious Lamentation—How Jesus Passed Through Closed Doors—An Angel's Autograph—Regenerating Tide of Spiritualism—Veneration of Sacred Relics—Prof. Austin Phelps, and Rev. Charles Beecher—Prof. W. Wundt, of Leipzig—Dr. Robert Hare as a Scientist—Lights of the American Association—Professors Agassiz, Mitchel and Rogers—Pierce, Davies and Winslow—Unworthy Conduct of the Scientific Association—An Eminent Professor of Natural Philosophy—Makes no Distinction Between Superstition and Spiritualism—In the Coils of a "Monstrous Hydra"—Shades of Hercules and St. Patrick—Beatification of Ignorance.

To the Editor of the Transcript :

IN his letter on the "Leipzig Phenomena," your Cambridge correspondent, Professor Edwin D. Mead, appears to be deeply exercised in view of the fact that just at present half of the sermons preached in New England "get their tone from Mr. Cook's Monday lectures." In his mind the discussion assumes a melancholy character that is very depressing to the souls of unbelievers. After referring to the "remarkable visions" of a church minister in "Quebec, over which all Canada is excited," and to "astounding messages" from Spirits, reported in the Greek language, he indulges in the following strain of mild reproof and pious lamentation :

"What may we not expect among ourselves when our clergy come up to Boston, week by week, to be encouraged to believe that conch-shells slip untroubled through the chair-seats, and that Spirit-hands imprint themselves in flour? The conch-shell slips through the chair-seat ;

how easy, then, forsooth, to see how the risen Jesus passed through the closed doors, to and from the circle of disciples. Spirit-hands, psychic hands, or what not, are in the air ; how luminous the story of the ghostly fingers which wrote '*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,*' upon Belshazzar's walls !"

Your correspondent seems to be in a state of solemn expectation, naturally looking for further and more startling revelations. It is true that the facts are multiplied in all directions, and the invisible powers present new illustrations and aspects of the truth often enough to utterly explode the materialistic speculations of each succeeding day. The truth is finding its way through many hard shells which may not be classified with the *strombus mollusks* ; and those who are resolved to resist it will hereafter require a triplicate theological sconce and the shield of scientific materialism as a defensive armor. "How the risen Jesus passed through closed doors," on entering and leaving "the circle of his disciples," is now forcibly illustrated, not by the learned exegesis of the professed ministers of his Gospel, but by the luminous commentary of the world's experience.

That multitudes now see "the handwriting on the wall," is a fact no longer to be questioned. Those who know how to interpret the mystical message, read in it the significant proclamation that the power of a Church which makes war on such essential facts and principles as constitute the only solid foundation of its claims, must be greatly modified, or it is destined to pass away from the earth, like the empire of the haughty ruler who desecrated the sacred vessels employed in the temple service. We need not be surprised that "the signs of the times" excite alarm among the "chief priests

and elders of the people." They recognize the imminent peril of a Church that has lost the vital principle of its spirituality. This Church is so much in love with stereotyped authorities and ancient relics, and has so little confidence in any "spiritual gifts" as a possible inheritance from its founders, that it boldly derides the faith of the sincere believer as a cheat and a delusion. It would not hesitate to send representatives all the way to Troas to procure St. Paul's old cloak, and it has great respect for "the parchments" he left behind; at the same time it will scoff at the suggestion of the possible presence of the ascended Apostle himself, as if faith in his immortality were a dream or a fiction.

But the evidence which has been rapidly accumulating for more than thirty years will soon sweep away the popular skepticism of the times and recast the faiths and philosophies of the world. Like a regenerating tide, Spiritualism is fast unsettling and upheaving the old foundations. All the lifeless creeds and dogmatic authorities; great wrongs baptized in the name of Jesus; all hollow pretensions and pious shams, are only drift-wood upon the stream—carried away as shifting sands by the ocean currents, and as the resistless waves bear the empty shells on to the shore. Multitudes like Belshazzar have been made to tremble when they saw the handwriting on the wall!

"And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray,"

shrinking, with child-like apprehension, from the grasp of invisible "spirit-hands . . . in the air," and vainly trying to hide the vision of those "ghostly fingers." But still the

luminous hand is visible. *It is the index from eternity that points to destiny!* To-day the hand writes on the walls of a thousand temples. Those who are not blinded by ignorance and prejudice may see what is written. We need no inspired prophet to interpret the impressive lesson. The message may vary in form, but the significance is the same—" *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin!* "

The fact that Rev. Joseph Cook's popular lectures determine the tone of half the sermons of the New England clergy is profoundly significant. That gentleman has been obliged to recognize many facts for which he has no satisfactory explanation. The accredited masters in science have never yet solved the complex problem which the subject involves. Like Prof. Phelps, of Andover, and several other divines, Mr. Cook is inclined to look to the demonology of the Bible for a solution. *This is a concession of the spiritual origin of the phenomena.* The assumption that the Spirit-authors of the modern manifestations are all evil, may shield those gentlemen from ecclesiastical condemnation; but it can have little or no weight in the mind of the honest investigator, who is sure, in the end, to form his opinion of the character of the Spirits from the results of his own observation and experience. Such men as Rev. Charles Beecher and Rev. Joseph Cook have the sagacity to apprehend what is coming, and the boldness to lead the way in which the clergy of all denominations must follow. These men will soon be recognized as the conservators of the Church. In thus preparing the way for the ultimate acceptance of Spiritualism, they are pursuing the only course that will save the outward form from ruin. Spiritual-

ism is God's great mill for pulverizing old superstitions, lifeless theologies, and the soulless systems of scientific materialism. It palsies the arms and shivers the weapons of its enemies; and any institution that attempts to stand in its way will be ground to powder, since the wheels of progress never rotate backward.

Your correspondent refers to the spiritual controversy in Germany; and, while unduly emphasizing the importance of Prof. Wundt's materialistic views, he takes occasion to disparage the just claims of Fechner, Fichte, Zöllner and Ulrici, in a most unrighteous manner. In his judgment the opinion of Prof. Wundt is worth twelve times as much as that of either Zöllner or Ulrici. Mr. Mead's opinion of the other German philosophers above named may be inferred from the following brief extract from his letter:

"Of Fechner and Fichte, in relation to the present controversy, it should be said that, however great their abilities once were, they were quite superannuated men, eighty years old and more, before launching upon the rickety theories with which their names have been lately identified."

It is worthy of observation that just so long as those distinguished scientists were presumed to be as blind as bats and ground-moles in respect to all spiritual things, they were regarded as eminent philosophers, whose many years and long experience had only added to their knowledge and ripened their judgment. But as soon as those illustrious teachers recognized the fact that Spirits of the immortal world were standing within their doors, every flippant scribbler against the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism made haste to discount their claims to public confidence. At an earlier period

the late venerable Dr. Robert Hare, who, some eighty years ago, invented the oxy-hydrogen blowpipe, was treated with still greater indignity. The name of the man who produced a flame so intense that it consumes the diamond and vaporizes most of the known solid substances, acquired such a reputation that, in his time, it was said that Philadelphia was chiefly known among European philosophers as the residence of Dr. Hare. No scientist ever questioned the soundness of his mind while he was inventing his instruments designed to detect and expose the assumed fraud of mediumship. At last when the Spirits made use of the Doctor's own invention to overthrow his chronic unbelief, and he was thus convinced of the truth of immortality, he straightway lost his standing among American scientists. Then they had no doubt he was either mad or in his dotage.

At the annual session of the American Association in 1856, Dr. Hare asked for one hour for a brief statement of the scientific methods and unexpected results of his experimental investigations ; but the Association refused to hear him. Even the overshadowing presence and influence of Professors Agassiz, Mitchel and Rogers failed to secure the privilege. Prof. Pierce maintained that such a subject could not properly be brought before a scientific association; and Prof. Davies, while expressing "profound respect for the gentleman from Philadelphia," was, nevertheless, willing to stop his mouth. A lesser and more lurid light in science, Dr. Winslow,—chiefly known for his investigations of subterraneous combustion or volcanic fires,—had the effrontery to suggest that, if the subject was to come before that body, he would move to convene a "special

session of the Association in the nearest lunatic asylum !” It is not among the more agreeable of the writer’s reminiscences of the time, that the offender escaped reproof for this shameful breach of decorum.

In referring to Spiritualism, Mr. Mead quotes what Prof. Wundt has to say about *superstition*, from which I extract the following passage :

“It were almost chimerical to hope that science will ever completely root it out. Nothing could darken such a hope more than the appearance of superstition in scientific circles themselves. Science, striking off one head from the monstrous hydra, is obliged to see a new one start out in another place—a head which soon enough assumes her own face.”

The fact is susceptible of the clearest demonstration, that a rational Spiritualism is far removed from everything that may be properly characterized as superstition. It has none of that excessive reverence which degrades the divinity in man ; it fosters no slavish fear of God or the devil ; its worship is never idolatrous nor otherwise inconsistent with reason ; it neither believes in celibacy nor polygamy ; it insists on no rigorous observance of religious rites ; its beautiful faith embraces no moral or mathematical impossibilities ; it neither accepts the infallibility of the letter of its own revelations, nor wastes time in pompous ceremonies which have no spiritual vitality ; it recognizes the Divinity in all things, and demands no emasculation of human nature in the interest of the soul. And yet Professor Wundt, who occupies the chair of Natural Philosophy in the University of Leipzig, and is reputed to be one of the most eminent psychologists in Germany, makes no distinction between Spiritualism and superstition ! The youth of fifteen who could not exercise more

discrimination should be sent to the field rather than the University.

Science is in despair, and this German professor is now struggling in the coils of what appears to his vision to be a "monstrous hydra." As often as he strikes off one head, he says "a new one starts out," and in mockery of his pretensions assumes the express image of Science herself. What is to be done? The process of actual cautery is powerless to extinguish the Spirits. Moreover, if they are all of the class usually recognized by the priesthood, they must have learned to stand fire. At present there is every indication that the monster will triumph at last. We know that Hercules is dead and his great labors are finished. St. Patrick, too, has gone to his rest in heaven; and the Leipzig professor is unequal to the herculean task of slaying this hydra. *Non omnia possumus omnes.*

In conclusion your correspondent admonishes us, by all means, to remain in ignorance of the dangers to which we are exposed. So solemn a warning may bear to be repeated in the interest of all heedless people; and so I beg to reproduce this last impressive exhortation which Mr. Mead has addressed to your readers:

"There are many things of which a man might wish to be ignorant, and these are such. Shun them as you would the secrets of the undertaker and the butcher. The best are never demoniacal or magnetic; leave this limbo to the prince of the power of the air."

Now when your correspondent says "the best are never demoniacal or magnetic," we are not sure whether he means "things" of the highest value, the most desirable "secrets,"

or "the best undertakers and butchers." Without attempting to settle this question, we may respectfully inquire if there may not be some danger in closing our eyes to evils which may chance to lie in our path? Shall we be sure to escape from the wolf that is on our track because we never look for him, and have managed to remain in ignorance of the natural history of the brute? * How the poor cravens who may be pleased to follow your correspondent's advice can guard against the peculiar dangers of which they know nothing does not clearly appear, and this may appropriately be made the subject of another letter of admonition from the classical shades of Cambridge.

Yours cordially,

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, }
WARREN CO., N. J., *March*, 1880. }

* Since "ignorance is bliss," and Professor Mead is known to depend on the same for the security of the brethren, let us add one to the Beatitudes. Write henceforth: Blessed are they who know nothing at all of the dangers to which they are exposed, for they are presumed to be safe.

THE TRIBUNE ON SPIRITUALISTS.

POLITICS FASHION AND SPORTING AT THE FRONT.

WRITTEN FOR THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE.

Note from Mr. Whitelaw Reid—Vindication of Spiritualism Declined—Unwritten Law of the Press—Fashionable and Vicious Topics Preferred—Subjects which secure instant Attention—Angry Divinity and depraved Humanity—Spiritualism hospitable to New Ideas—It Rationalizes Philosophy and Spiritualizes Religion—The Ghosts from Hades—Spiritual Light and Liberty—Related as Cause and Effect—The Tree by the Crystal River—Where Spiritualism most Prevails—Observations on the Old World—England, France and Germany—Views of Heaven—Sensuous Conception of the New Jerusalem—Materialists demand the Evidence of the Senses—Wrestling with an Angel.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

THE subjoined communication was elicited by an editorial in the *New York Tribune* of the 23d of July, and was addressed, as will be perceived, to the Editor of that journal, who declined it in a polite note which is herewith submitted :

“This is returned, with thanks for the courtesy of the offer, and regrets that, with the pressure on our columns, we have not been able to make it exactly available for the uses of the *Tribune*.—WHITELAW REID.”

Of course a daily newspaper which is necessarily so much occupied with the discussion of the issues involved in the present political campaign, will have little room until after the Presidential election for the treatment of spiritual and moral questions, however important in their nature and bearing on the higher interests of society. We will not be so ungra-

cious as to question the sufficiency of the Editor's reasons for thus declining to publish our vindication of Spiritualism. Nor need we be surprised should even more space—than the same would require—be devoted to other matters of either doubtful or demoralizing tendency. The press has its own *lex non scripta* which no power may reverse. There are certain things which *must be published*, you know, even if it be necessary to issue an Extra. If there should be either a contest in the prize-ring, a cock-fight, or some other disgusting exhibition of brutality, it would be necessary to make some place in the crowded columns of the daily press for a particular description of the same, because that would be "live matter," and our muscular and sporting sovereigns must have the news.

But we may discover more agreeable illustrations in many places, especially at Saratoga, Newport, and other summer resorts. For example, should some person give a fashionable party, it would be necessary to send special reporters commissioned to relate all that delicacy may permit about the persons and costumes of the reigning belles—describe to what extent the floor was carpeted with satin trains, so gracefully drawn behind willowy creatures, whose "tantalizing shapes"—according to Festus—"bring up the devil and the ten commandments." And then proper respect must be paid, not so much to the wealth of years as to the affluence of fine laces, diamond jewelry and costly equipage. It would be a most ungracious neglect on the part of the newspapers to disregard all these gentle people and their superfine wampum. Now and then it seems to be necessary to heed the demand of the best society for a complete list of—

“The gaudy dames of fashion, who have driven
Up the broad carriage-road to Fancy’s heaven.”

SPIRITUALISM VINDICATED.

“Laugh where we must, be candid where we can,
But vindicate the ways of God to man.”—*Pope.*

To the Editor of the Tribune :

YOUR editorial in the *Tribune* of the 23d inst., elicited by the present Camp-Meeting near Philadelphia, is in rather pleasant contrast with the old-time commentaries of the newspaper press. A semi-facetious manner of treating the whole subject is certainly a great improvement on the intolerant and acrimonious spirit which characterized the earlier treatment of Spiritualism. But you will pardon the suggestion that you may possibly make a mistake, in respect to the popular judgment, when you presume that, as a rule, the believers are “publicly regarded as a gloomy and uncanny band.” If I am qualified to form an intelligent opinion on the subject, the views of all rational Spiritualists are eminently calculated to lift the cloud with which a false theology has obscured the future life, and remarkably effective in dissipating the terrible gloom which has made not a few men mad and millions melancholy.

But can any man regret the existence of the power which demonstrates his own immortality while it breaks the shackles which have fettered the freedom of the universal mind? And is there aught to inspire gloom in the announcement that

“Man no more shall veil
His free-born thought, or bow with visage pale,
And knees that knock together, when the Priest
Of Rome or Oxford dictates?”

Only priestly authorities and a scientific materialism have reason to shrink from the present ordeal. Who that is in love with truth cares how soon the consumer's brand is applied to "the wood, hay and stubble" of all human devices? Who weeps when the destroying fires that waste the meadows and the fields go out and the morning-glories spring up out of the ashes, and deserts blossom? Who sorrows for the waning night, or grieves because the Orient is ablaze with morning light? Spiritualism comes to solve the greatest of all problems—" *If a man die shall he live again?* " It is sure to extract whatever elements of truth there may be in the ancient superstitions. It is rapidly pulverizing the old creeds, born of the weak faith which recognizes an angry Divinity and a totally depraved humanity. It is time that the reign of the woman of the Apocalypse—whom the Seer of Patmos described as "sitting on a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy"—with her legitimate daughters, and the whole brood of dogmatic creeds and soul-oppressing rites, should give place to rational liberty and a scientific philosophy.

It should be observed that, unlike the systems which preceded its advent, Spiritualism cordially accepts all demonstrated facts in every field of investigation; it is everywhere hospitable to new ideas; it encourages the most fearless exercise of reason on all subjects, not excepting religion; it lovingly embraces every principle of true science, and as freely assimilates all sound philosophy. By its agency faith and reason are harmoniously united; and while religion is rationalized, philosophy is spiritualized. It gives us a view of the Spirit-world and the future life which is far more honorable

to the Creator, and every way more congenial with all human instincts, desires, affections and aspirations, than the lurid pictures of heathen poets, and the pulpit delineations of a merciless retribution. It casts out the Prince of Darkness from the world's theology, and the fires of hell are extinguished. In the growing light of a rational Spiritualism— which the Church and the world appear to despise—

“The great beast
Of Calvinism, born from out the sea
Of the Dark Ages and their tyranny,
Shall shrink into a spectral cloud, and pass
From earth like vapor from a burning-glass.”

You observe: “It seems a little hard on the ghosts of the departed to summon them back to earth just now out of their retreats in Hades.” But how or why is it so “hard on the ghosts?” And in the light of this suggestion how will the *Tribune's* orthodoxy escape suspicion? I believe the Greek Hades is uniformly rendered *hell* by the translators of the New Testament; and if hell is as warm a region as the evangelical pulpit represents it to be, it must be a great relief to the poor ghosts to have an occasional excursion to this green earth, and a day of recreation in the sylvan shades of Neshaminy Falls or Onset Bay Grove. If Spiritualism really brings with it a general jail-delivery of the poor imprisoned souls in Hades, who knows but the world may be about to realize the end for which an early and most eminent Spiritual Teacher, long ago, “went and preached unto the spirits in prison.”— (I. Peter iii. 19).

You state a significant fact when you say, that in “the West belief in Spiritualism is more widely spread than in any other

quarter except New England." It has made the greatest advances where the light of intelligence has been most thoroughly diffused. The great tree of our Spiritual Liberty was first rooted in this country of liberal institutions; and now, after a lapse of only one-third of a century, it spreads its grateful shade over the world. It is true that some foul birds come to roost in its branches; and where do they not perch themselves outside of the kingdom of heaven? It may be presumed that buzzards, owls and bats, not less than swallows, sky-larks and birds of paradise, love to sit in pleasant places. Nevertheless, Spiritualism is "the tree of life" that flourishes close by the crystal river, bearing immortal fruits, "and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." It finds the most suitable soil and congenial atmosphere where the light is strongest and the culture of mind and morals is most general. Hence it is that Spiritualism has made the greatest progress in the Eastern States where the standard of education is highest, and the humane sentiments exert the strongest influence on the popular mind and heart. Then the great West is pointed to as the scene of its triumphs. Spiritualism is strong in the Western States, because in that quarter the arbitrary restraints of dogmatic theology are feeblest, and for the reason that we there find the most independent thought among the people. In the Middle States its victories are less conspicuous; while in the South, Spiritualism has the weakest hold upon the minds and affections of the masses.

The same rule is equally true in its application to the Old World. Spiritualism has obtained the strongest foothold among the most enlightened nations of Europe—in England,

France, and Germany. Naturally enough in foreign countries it has made the greatest progress among the most intellectual classes ; numbering in the long list of its adherents many of the nobility ; a large proportion of the *litterati*, and eminent artists of different countries ; distinguished scientists of England and profound philosophers of the German schools. A full list of the names of eminent men and women, from among all nations and every rank in society, who now accept the cardinal facts and fundamental principles of the Spiritual Philosophy, would astonish even those who are best informed on the subject.

We hardly think that Spiritualists, as a body, would accept the parties you name, or any others, as *chief* among the prophets of the New Dispensation. But while this is a subject in which the writer feels no special interest, I will ask your further indulgence while I briefly refer to the subject of heaven, as viewed respectively by Christians and Spiritualists. You seem to think that the heaven of the latter is a very materialistic establishment,* while the heaven of Christians is eminently intangible and spiritual in its nature. Here permit me to introduce a brief passage from your editorial :

“The heaven revealed to St. John was too intangible for solid beef-eating men and women to grasp ; but a heaven filled by spirits who rap on your table and pinch your legs is appreciable to the most downright intellect.”

Now if language, in this case as in the other, is to be interpreted *literally*, it would be difficult to conceive of a more ma-

* It is readily acknowledged that this inference may be fairly drawn from the writings of a number of professed Spiritualists.

terial heaven than the one described in the Apocalyptic vision. It is a city laid out in a square, surrounded by high walls, with "twelve gates," in honor of "the twelve tribes." It is said that "the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the walls of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones" (Rev. xxi. 18, 19). We cannot say what may be the judgment of the "solid beef-eating men and women," but we may possibly apprehend the reason why Wall Street and Fifth Avenue prefer the New Jerusalem view of the subject. Among a people whose chief trust is in "gilt-edged securities," a city composed of gold and precious stones will always possess unequalled attractions.

As to the "spirits who rap on your table and pinch your legs," we may as well admit, in respect to their deportment, that they do not "put on the airs" which characterize the conduct of the highest dignitaries in Church and State. But very worthy spirits may and do let themselves down for a laudable purpose—it may be to give a tangible manifestation to some unreasoning skeptic who can only be convinced by hard knocks. All instruction must be adapted to the necessities of the ignorant and undeveloped mind. The sage does not stoop too low when he teaches the lisping child the alphabet of his language. The conduct of the spirits who come to us may be neither unreasonable, unnecessary, nor without eminent examples. The Materialist demands the evidence of the senses; he will be satisfied with no other; and it may be necessary to strike hard to produce deep and lasting conviction. Saul of Tarsus had to be knocked down by a Spirit before he would believe that one was present. The persecuting Pharisee was struck with

such force as to occasion a temporary paralysis of the optic nerves ; and, according to the report of the sacred canon, one of the Lord's angels wrestled all night with the patriarch Jacob ; and when the Angel relinquished his hold in the morning, it is said that "*Jacob's thigh was out of joint!*" (Gen. xxxii. 24, 25.) Spiritualists can wait for the future to verify the proverb of the Latins—" *Vincit omnia veritas.*"

S. B. BRITAN.

BELVIDERE, N. J., }
 July 26, 1880. }

POSSIBILITIES OF SPIRITUALISM.—The old systems of theology are smitten with *dry rot*. The antiseptic properties of oral praise and prayer will not save them, for they are dying. Something better must soon occupy their places ; and here—let me observe—is our great opportunity. Spiritualism only needs to be placed in a true light and on a proper basis, with means and methods adapted to its divine uses and deathless issues, and it will speedily become the philosophy and religion of the civilized world. Bound by no creed ; pledged to the support of no sect or party ; hospitable to every newly discovered truth ; cordially accepting the results of philosophical inquiry and scientific investigation ; truly reverent in spirit, but independent in the exercise of reason, why may it not realize the wants of every loving heart and the aspirations of all enlightened minds ?

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

A CALIFORNIA JACK-WITH-A-LANTERN.

WRITTEN FOR THE ARGONAUT OF SAN FRANCISCO.

A Critic's Views of Science—Relations of Facts to Scientific Systems—Horology and Instruments for Measuring Time—Mistaken Views of the *Argonaut*—Friendly Criticism—Hypothesis of Fraud and Jugglery—Theory of Involuntary Cerebral Action—A Harvard Professor with the Spirits—Science on and Dignity under the Table—An Epic Poem from the Spirits—Remarkable Improvisation—The Solar Harp—Doctrine of Chances Illustrated—Is Meteorology a Science?—Comparison of Physical and Spiritual Phenomena—Facts in Science which Centuries may not Repeat.

“Thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.”—*Pope*.

To the Editor of the Argonaut :

SOME one has sent me your paper of the date of May 22d, in which I find a marked article entitled “*Spiritualistic Blunders*.” I am much pleased with the general appearance of your journal, and recognize the ability displayed in the treatment of such topics as come within the range of ordinary thought and familiar observation. But will you permit me to remark, *per contra*, that some one—whom I suppose to be on your editorial staff—is equally unfortunate in what he writes about Science and Spiritualism? After asking the question, “What is Science?” he answers—without hesitation, and in a manner which is at least admirable for its directness, however widely his definition may be found to diverge from all the recognized principles and approved methods

of the schools. From this lucid but very questionable exposition of what constitutes science—in the opinion of the writer—I extract the following passage :

“Established facts ; logical conclusions ; systems that work ; that never fail, that never disappoint. Three and two are five. . . . A clock that keeps time ; an engine that will run ; a steamship that sweeps the ocean ; a telegraph wire ; laws of nature discovered ; complications invented ; systems of mechanism, chemistry or thought that never fail—that repeat, or illustrate, or demonstrate whenever you choose to test them ; contrivances and processes that know no failure and no disappointment—these are science.”

It seems evident that the author of the foregoing definitions could never have familiarized his mind with either the principles or terminology of the sciences. The relation of “established facts” to science is often so remote and obscure as to be quite imperceptible. Viewed alone and without reference to any rules of classification, or to the discovery of the laws which govern their occurrence, they never constitute a science in any comprehensive sense of the term. The writer in the *Argonaut* does not limit his statement to facts of any particular class, or to any one department of human observation. Let us therefore take a few examples at random, and leave the writer under review to dispute the facts or show their relations to science. The following will be sufficient for the present illustration. Mr. Gladstone succeeded Lord Beaconsfield as the responsible head of the British cabinet ; Gen. Garfield is the Republican candidate for the Presidency ; Charles A. Dana is editor-in-chief of the *New York Sun* ; roosters are most disposed to crow in the morning ; there are men base enough to admire the heroism of the prize ring ; the papers still publish the details of cock-fights ; the State continues to

break the necks of capital offenders, even when they are young converts to the Christian religion ! These are all well “ established facts ; ” but what have they to do with science ? Nothing in particular, so far as we are able to discover.

It is true that facts are quite indispensable in the formulated knowledge which we denominate science. But these are not all that we require to constitute a scientific system. *The facts must be classified agreeably to the recognized principles involved in the subject of our observations.* They must be so disposed that the mind may comprehend their relations to the essential principles and immutable laws which determine and regulate their occurrence. Facts, then, are only some of the materials from which different sciences may be and are constituted. It is well known that bricks are necessary in the construction of a suitable dwelling ; but a brick is not a house, and it must be equally evident that a fact is not a science.

Again, we are informed that “ A clock that keeps time ” is “ science ; ” but we fail to see it in that light. A clock is an instrument which illustrates Horology—the science of measuring time. Science explains the principles and laws involved in the construction of instruments for this purpose. A clock is one form of an instrument for measuring time ; but it is not the science of Horology. The presumption that it is, overlooks the necessary distinction between the mere instrument and the branch of science it is designed to illustrate. We depend on the barometer to indicate the existing atmospheric pressure, and the probable changes in the weather ; but he would be a crazy scientist who should so utterly confound the mercury and the barometrical scale with the variations of the

atmosphere as to recognize no possible distinction between an object which properly belongs to the department of constructive art and the science of atmospheric phenomena. There is substantially the same difference between the clock and the science of measuring time, that exists between the barometer and the science of the weather.

Your article suggests that sciences must be very numerous when one can be found in almost any inanimate object, even in "a telegraph wire," which is also said to be "science." It is true that wires are employed in the science of Telegraphy ; but the wires are only one part of the apparatus used in the practical application of this science. Here we note the same want of discrimination in the use of terms, and a total indifference to that precision of statement which characterizes all true science. Agriculture, especially in its superior relations to chemistry, is a profound and most important science. Plows and hoes are agricultural implements ; but must we have all our ideas of scientific principles and the proprieties of speech *harrowed* up by being told that shovels, hoes and pitch-forks are sciences !

I need not traverse all the terms and forms of expression under which the writer, who elucidates Science and Spiritualism for your journal, claims to have discovered the former. If his questionable judgment is to be accepted, then the essential elements of science are also to be found in "*complications invented.*" This conception has every appearance of originality ; but is it true ? We must confess we had not dreamed of it, and should never have thought of looking there for those elements. The subject may be obscure, but Webster comes

to our aid with the following plain definitions of "*complication*:" "*Intricate or confused blending of parts ; entanglement ; the act or the state of being involved.*" From this view of the subject we might reasonably expect that great scientific attainments need not be so rare. If "complication," or a "confused blending of parts," constitutes science, it follows that the greater the complication or confusion, the more profound the knowledge it involves, and the ancient Babel must forever stand forth at the head of all scientific institutions. If "*entanglement*" is science, the miserable fellow who is lost in a bramble-jungle, and cannot find his way out, is in a fair way to graduate with all the honors.

"The act or state of being involved" is thus defined by the same philological authority: "*To envelope in anything which exists upon all sides ; as, to involve in darkness and obscurity.*" Now, when we look for science in the "complications invented;"—and when we find it, in "confusion," "entanglement" and "darkness"—it is astonishing how scientists are multiplied. The motley crowd not only embraces all those well-dressed aspirants who are striving to reach the temple of fame, but

"The gathering number, as it moves along,
Involves a vast, involuntary throng."

Since science is made to consist in "complications"—"*confusion and entanglement,*" as the term is explained by Webster—we need not seek the shadow of the University, unbar the doors of classic halls, or search in the groves of Academus for wise men. When confusion is science, mere wranglers ought to be sages, and madmen supremely happy; at

the same time the lawless rabble must be on the royal highway to knowledge and power.

While respectfully submitting these brief observations respecting your views of science—which are offered in no unfriendly spirit—I trust I may be permitted to notice your summary three-ply method of disposing of Spiritualism. And first you observe—respecting the spiritual phenomena—“we must aver that a large portion undoubtedly” belong to “the imposture part.” But I beg to say that *the cases of “imposture” are in no sense a part of Spiritualism*, but, on the contrary, the work of its enemies. If the Editor, in assaying a specimen of ore from any one of the mines, should find four ounces of gold and three of other metallic substances, would the assayer be likely to state in his report that the ore tested gave seven ounces of gold, but that “a large portion” of the same was some baser metal? Should your agricultural Editor, or the statistician in your office, be required to estimate the wheat crop of this country, would he represent that the United States annually produces about 450,000,000 bushels of wheat, but that one-twentieth part, more or less, of the whole is *beans*, and “a large portion” of the remainder “is undoubtedly” *tares*? Of course no sane man would make such a report. It is only on the abused subject of Spiritualism (possibly on science) that the newspapers expect to be excused for publishing such nonsense. When the Secretary of the Treasury figures up the amount of the national currency *he never includes the counterfeits*. For a similar reason we insist that all impostors and jugglers be excluded in estimating the numbers of Spiritualists and mediums, and that all the tricks

and frauds be left out of the record and analysis of Spiritual Phenomena.

Your next method of disposing of the facts of Spiritualism is by *referring them to the involuntary action of the brain and nervous system*. But pray, Sir, what possible relation can the involuntary action of the brain have to one in a hundred of these facts? Will you ascribe phenomena to unconscious cerebration which the individual is forever incapable of producing by the concentrated action of his faculties and the utmost effort of the will? Yet your assumption involves this manifest absurdity. It is a fact established beyond all rational controversy that ponderable bodies—sometimes weighing several hundred pounds—are moved with irresistible force, and yet in such a manner as to clearly demonstrate the fact that this surprising power is guided by an invisible intelligence, human in all its essential characteristics. If, indeed, the involuntary action of the brain so far transcends the utmost exertion of its voluntary powers, let the fact be demonstrated. If the agents and forces are all in this world, the scientists ought to be able to prove the fact and find the agents. If there is any substantial evidence to support any one of the thousand materialistic theories and speculations, we are quite ready to receive and digest it; but the mind becomes flatulent that feeds forever on hollow assumptions.

I was once present at a *séance* when a Harvard University Professor, with a friend weighing over two hundred pounds avoirdupois, rode about the room on a table; and then both were hurled headlong on the floor by this invisible agency; and I have an explicit statement of the facts, to which the

Professor referred to subscribed his own proper name. Is it to be supposed that the involuntary and unconscious action of either his cerebellum or cerebrum moved the vehicle on which he rode, together with the superincumbent weight of some four hundred pounds? Did this silent cerebration, in spite of the man himself, send him and his companion sprawling on the floor? If a single brain-power can develop such amazing force without the least effort to do so, every sluggard ought to be able to plant, hoe, and grind his corn by his own cerebral motive power. If there is any truth in the assumption it would appear that *the way to accomplish the greatest possible results is to make no effort whatever*. This is a fair sample of the reasoning employed by the opposition to Spiritualism. If there is anything in this theory, the philosophers of the Micawber school must be right, and the power of a dozen loafers might be utilized to run a line of stages; fashionable idlers and all vulgar drones might become useful members of society, and hereafter make some show at the farmers' and mechanics' fair.

I have before me an Epic Poem of some five thousand lines. It is a grand conception; the imagery is equally bold and beautiful, while it is entitled to a high rank as a metrical composition. It is believed that no living poet, unaided by special inspiration or direct spiritual agency, could produce such a work in six weeks; and yet *it was improvised through a medium in just twenty-six hours and sixteen minutes!* I know it is the fashion with the secular press to assume that all the poetry emanating from the Spirits is mere doggerel and utterly worthless. For this reason I may be permitted to extract—

almost at random and not on account of the exceptional merit of the passage—a few lines as an illustrative example of the quality of the poem to which reference is here made. The heavenly muse contemplates our planetary system as a grand musical instrument—the SOLAR HARP. One chord in the stellar lyre (the Spirit's reference is to the Earth) is represented as *unstrung*. But the angels—the invisible ministers of the divine harmonies—touch the Earth with immortal fire and it is renewed. The chord which had lost its tone is restored and becomes responsive ; and Earth, with radiant face—coming up out of the darkness and discord with the unbroken symbols of her power—joins in the Solar Anthem.

THE SOLAR HARP.

“ There are twelve great chords in the Solar Harp—
One chord alone unstrung ;

That chord is touched with a living spark,
And again it finds a tongue.

Joy ! joy ! joy !

That chord is touched with a living spark,
And the Earth grows fair and young.

“ There are twelve great Angels above the stars,
And they sit on their thrones of gold ;

But the throne of one, by Death's iron bars,
Was crushed in the ages old.

Joy ! joy ! joy !

For Earth's throne again is among the stars,
And she sits in the Angel-fold.

“ There are twelve great Nations in solar space,
But one of them sat in the gloom ;

The sun of its glory veiled its face
In the darkness of the tomb.

Joy ! joy ! joy !
 For the twelfth great Nation lifts its face,
 And glows with immortal bloom." *

—*Epic of the Starry Heaven.*

The third and last hypothetical method by which you propose to explain the facts of Spiritualism—to borrow and emphasize your own words—is “*the doctrine of chances, the slippery foundation on which all this superstructure of superstition and imposture rests.*” Here you obviously abandon the first and second hypotheses, and now rest “all” on what you are pleased to term the “slippery foundation.” Every one who has made the phenomena a subject of serious observation knows very well that the claims of Spiritualism rest on no such uncertain foundation. Let me frankly tell you that such hypothetical facts as you are pleased to use in your peculiar method of illustration, are not such as any rational believer is accustomed to depend upon. May I ask why you do not look at the real facts in the case, instead of trifling with a grave subject by the use of bogus examples ?

Now suppose you make an application of your doctrine of chances to the composition of the Epic, and tell us how by chance such a work was accomplished in twenty-six hours and a quarter, when there exists not even a shadow of probability that the combined powers of the medium and all the witnesses could ever have produced it at all. The idea that it is possible to execute such a work by *accident*—in other words, *in the absence of any design and without effort*—will not be en-

* These lines have been set to appropriate music, composed by Prof. George Harrison, the eminent English artist and teacher of vocal music.

tertained for a moment by any rational mind. To illustrate your doctrine of chances—which Dr. Adam Clark defines to be “men’s ignorance of the real and immediate cause”—employ a man to throw paint all day at canvas; let him continue the experiment as long as he lives; then let another succeed him in the exercise of the same function; and so on for centuries in unbroken succession. If in one thousand years you chance to get, by this means, a faithful copy of Raphael’s “Madonna,” or of Michael Angelo’s “Last Judgment,” you may possibly find some one disposed to listen to the doctrine of chances as an explanation of the Spiritual Phenomena.

You object that “*Spiritualism will not be put to work—will not subserve any human purpose—will not come when wanted, . . . it will not repeat itself,*” or, in other words, the phenomena can not be reproduced *ad libitum*. That Spiritualism has been most effectually “put to work” to overthrow the scientific materialism of the age, and to revise the religious beliefs of all Christendom, is obvious enough to all who are pleased to look at the evidence. That in this way it subserves a divine purpose by quickening the spiritual faculties in human nature, and by furnishing scientific confirmation of our faith in immortality—is already demonstrated to the entire satisfaction of several millions of the human race. When you object that, in respect to positive evidence, it is altogether unlike science, because its phenomena cannot always be repeated, or reproduced at pleasure, you assume too much. This is no less true of a very large portion of accredited science. I have not time to survey the whole circle of the sciences with a view to an analytical and exhaustive *exposé* of the

fallacy of your reasoning, and hence a more summary method must be adopted. The barometer may indicate the same general atmospheric conditions, but the nimbus and cumulo-stratus clouds never assume precisely the same forms any two days in the whole year. The laws of Nature are ever the same, but her method produces endless variety, and never an exact reproduction of the same phases and aspects. And because this is the truth, which no one may dispute, will you assume that meteorology is no science ?

If we may not exactly duplicate the same fact in Spiritualism at will, it is nevertheless true that facts of a similar character may be obtained at almost any time under suitable conditions. But in science there are many facts which may never be repeated at our solicitation. This does not warrant our disputing their actual occurrence. Should you chance to observe, on some clear night, one of those small cosmical bodies which, for a moment, become incandescent by their motion through the Earth's atmosphere—a shooting-star or luminous meteor—and you were to make the same the subject of a paragraph in the *Argonaut*, you would not expect your readers to dispute your statement, and obstinately refuse to believe unless you would make a definite appointment, bring forward your meteor, and so continue to repeat the exhibition at stated periods, or as often as the caprice of some caviling skeptic might dictate. There may be creatures in human shape so enslaved that they hug the chains they wear ;

“ As the pipes of some carved organ move
The gilded puppets' dance.”

But Nature is not at fault in such servility ; nor is science

the servant of petty dictators. On the contrary, Nature pursues her majestic course regardless of our vain conceits ; nor can the administration of her perfect laws be stayed to save an empire.

“ Such is the world’s great harmony that springs
From union, order, and consent of things.”

Astronomers tell us that there is a pale pilgrim of the sky, whose flaming hair trails through one hundred millions of miles of ether ; that this celestial traveler has made but a single circuit or revolution since Noah’s flood ; and we are disposed to believe what they say. Science presumes that this mysterious apparition will come round again in the far-away future. Now here is another heavenly body (we know not how many such exist) that will not reappear at our bidding ; it will not come and stop and pose for your artist ; and so you may, if you will, ridicule the pretensions of the astronomers. In this case you will nurse your unbelief a long time if you wait for a personal introduction to this missionary of light from heaven. Before you may hope to realize the visible presence of this strange traveler, the last of the *Argonauts* may founder in the great sea of popular skepticism, realizing at last that “ the golden fleece ” is not for the faithless.

We shall finish our own brief commentary on passing events and the drift of the world’s thought ; but *cosmos* will remain. The procession of the seasons will move along ; nations will rise and fall, and the centuries come and go. But when that pale wanderer comes back from his long pilgrimage to the frontiers of the astral system, we shall watch his progress from observatories in the heavens, and how will this world

be changed! It is more than probable that the foremost nations of Europe will have finished their career and live only in history. Even the model Republic of the Nineteenth Century may only exist in story, because among the more enduring monuments of great Peoples their languages may prove to be immortal.

Permit me to suggest that your science needs a thoughtful revision and important amendments to secure its acceptance by scholarly minds. Should you be pleased to enter upon the work of revision, in the true spirit of philosophical inquiry, you may find occasion to extend your researches into a realm you have not yet explored. It is the self-love which is satisfied with its present attainments that vainly strives to fix limits to scientific investigation and discovery. The rising tide of independent thought and universal progress will sweep away all such arbitrary barriers, and with them those scientific pigmies whose low ambition would fix the final limit of all possible achievement within the sphere of our mundane life and sensorial perceptions.

In the true spirit of freedom and universal Progress, and in the hope that the boundaries of Science will soon be so far enlarged as to embrace our formulated knowledge of spiritual things, I am, my dear sir,

Yours truly,

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE, WARREN CO., N. J., }
July 28, 1880. }

MODERN SPIRITUALISM DEFENDED.

IS THE ADVANCE GOING BACKWARD ?

FROM THE HULMEVILLE (PA.) DELAWARE VALLEY ADVANCE, AUG. 19, 1881.

“ Little is the wisdom, when the flight
So runs against all reason.”—*Shak.*

The War on Religious Freedom—Hulmeville proposes Limits—Striking at the Protestant Reformation—Ignoring the Declaration of Independence—Science opposed to Religious Despotism—The Throne and the Tribune—Case of William Twinning—Derangement and Death from Disease—From the University to Bedlam—How too much Love kills People—Shall we stop Loving?—Religious Lunatics—Shall we turn Infidel?—Neshaminy Falls Mass-Meeting—Christians die suddenly—Shall we suppress the Christian Religion?—Black Sheep in the Fold—Bishop Onderdonk and the Episcopacy—Infallible Signs of Dissolution—Where Carelessness is Crime.

To the Editor of the Advance :

SIR: Some one has sent me your paper of the fifth instant, containing your double-leaded editorial leader on “Spiritualism and its Influence.” In this article you appeal to the community to “join together and devise means by which its further development and growth may be prevented.” You appear to have arrived at no final conclusion as to the degree of religious liberty which may be tolerated with safety to society ; but, in respect to the exercise and enjoyment of this freedom by Spiritualists, you would impose some arbitrary restraints. No other conclusion is warranted by the terms of the following extract from your editorial :

“ It is a very difficult matter for private opinion to decide how far a

license may be given to advocacy and teaching of things which bring ruin and death in their train. That there must be a limit somewhere every one will admit. But to set bounds to the limitation is the matter which must yet be decided ; and decided it will be, etc."

Let me respectfully remind you that when you undertake to stifle free thought on moral and religious questions, and to subvert the right of private judgment, you gravely propose to strike at the fundamental principles of the Protestant Reformation, at the Declaration of American Independence, and the inalienable rights of man. Men of great ability, large opportunities and commanding influence shrink from the responsibility of such a contract. The Nineteenth Century is too far advanced, the light of science is too widely diffused, and the people are too much in love with our free institutions to warrant the expectation of success in such an experiment. A religious despotism has no chance in republican America. Democracy irreverently takes the Pope's bull by the horns and leads him captive into the wilderness. We have no more respect for the crozier and miter than for crowns and scepters. We cut down the throne and whittle it into a tribune for the use of our representatives, or, what may be better still, *a free platform for the people*. Inspired by the love of Justice and Liberty, we break all the symbols of arbitrary power and scatter the fragments to the winds.

The pretext for the publication of your article is found in the case of the unfortunate William Twining. I have no knowledge of this case except what I derive from your report, and I certainly have no disposition to question the general correctness of your statement. The facts, as made public in your paper, plainly show that Mr. Twining was a victim of some

fatal disease which was accompanied, from its incipiency, by cerebral derangement, and followed by ungovernable delirium and sudden dissolution. In several different forms of vital derangement the attack is often accompanied by intense cerebration, and delirium is a frequent concomitant of acute diseases. In such cases it is quite natural for the patient to rave about the subject that last occupied the mind. This fact furnishes no evidence that the subject of thought had anything whatever to do in causing the patient's illness. *That may have wholly depended upon physical causes*, as every well informed and candid physician will readily admit. That Mr. Twining's Spiritualism was not the real cause of his disease and death, is rendered more than probable from your own statement of the facts. When people become deranged from constantly dwelling upon some all-engrossing subject they do not, as a rule, expire suddenly. Indeed, insane people are scarcely more likely to die prematurely than others. The asylums have scores of inmates who have been there for many years, and these poor unfortunates often live to be old. On the contrary, it appears from your statement of the facts in the particular case of Mr. Twining, that *only three days intervened between the first symptoms of mental derangement and the death of the patient.*

But, if it should be made to appear that Spiritualism sustained some doubtful relation to the loss of this man's mental equilibrium, his case would only furnish another illustration of the fact, that a too concentrated and protracted application of the mind to any one subject is liable to derange the mental functions. Thousands of imperfectly balanced people

have lost their mental equipoise in this way, but very few of them, however, were Spiritualists. In such cases the mind is deranged, not because there is necessarily anything in the subject of its meditations to disturb the harmonic action of the faculties, but for the obvious reason that this intense and prolonged strain upon the mind is forever incompatible with the laws of physical and mental harmony.

I have known more than one merchant who went from his counting-room to the lunatic asylum. The incidental cause of the mental derangement was, too constant application to business, and the mercenary spirit that would not employ a book-keeper. But would you put an embargo on commerce, and have the store-houses of other men shut up on that account? Students, with unbalanced brains and feeble minds, have been sent from the University to Bedlam, but the faculty did not resign; many others went to the same institution—I mean to the University—and no one ever suspected that a proper education was a dangerous thing.

The present writer was well acquainted with a man in Massachusetts—the foremost farmer in all the region—whose real estate and personal property made him the wealthiest man in the township to which he belonged. So strong was this man's love of mammon that it produced a morbid apprehension that he was about to lose his large possessions. This false conception gained strength until it preyed upon him day and night. Fearing that he might, after his almost life-long labor, end his days in the almshouse, he terminated his unhappy life by hanging himself on his own broad domain. It was with a cheerful submission to "the mysterious ways of Provi-

dence," that the heirs of that man took possession of their own lawful inheritance; at the same time the neighboring farmers never for a moment suspected that there was any natural relation of cause and effect between agricultural pursuits and suicide.

Love has unmoored the minds of multitudes and left them to drift over the sea of life in darkness and despair. Among the most hopeless wrecks of our poor humanity are many who have "loved, not wisely," but with a fatal intensity. And still every normally constituted young man is sure to find his sweetheart, and every blushing maiden accepts her lover. No one proposes to disregard the divine injunction to "love one another" because the vital fire sometimes consumes the altar on which the flame is kindled.

It is also true that the lunatic asylums contain many persons whose mournful record, as will appear from the books kept by those institutions, is, that they became insane from mental and nervous excitement occasioned by their *religious experience*. The history of revivals is illustrated by hundreds of such melancholy examples. Only the other day a woman who was a member of the congregation at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, Rev. Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage, pastor, is said to have lost her reason from the force of a solemn conviction and the intensity of her religious emotions. Will the Editor of the *Advance* tell us who is to be held accountable for this case, and where is the graceless iconoclast, who, on such a poor pretext, is ready to madly rush into Atheism, and sacrilegiously pull down the temples consecrated to the Christian Religion over the devoted heads of the worshipers?

In a local paragraph you state the fact, on the authority of the New York *Herald*, that the "crowd in attendance at the Spiritualist Camp, on Sunday, the first instant, at Neshaminy Falls, numbered over ten thousand persons." Yet in your attempt to illustrate the influence of Spiritualism you select the one unfortunate individual whose recent illness and sudden death furnished the occasion for your appeal to the public. Mr. Twining is said to have died a Spiritualist. Be it so; but *that fact does not explain the cause of his death*. Christians also die—sometimes in a state of the wildest delirium; but no discreet journalist appeals to the public to suppress the religion of the Cross. From a solitary example of a man who, probably, died from inflammation of the brain, you jump to the conclusion that the influence of Spiritualism is of so dangerous a nature that something must be done to suppress this pernicious heresy. Your offense, Sir, consists of a proposition to engage—with others who may be like-minded—in a conspiracy to deprive a large class of American citizens of their rights. On this grave subject you converse as coolly, and with as little apparent regard to the world's faith and philosophy, and the constitutional rights of millions, as a city Alderman would exhibit in discussing the propriety of a municipal ordinance for muzzling dogs! Why not undertake to suppress the Christian Religion because church members sometimes have *cerebro-spinal meningitis*; or, otherwise, because all Christians are liable to die—some quite suddenly and others from wasting disease—die holding on at the last to the expressive symbol of their faith?

Now, my dear Sir, may I be permitted to inquire why you

select William Twining's case as the one and only illustrative example of the influence of Spiritualism? Have you forgotten *the nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine other people who attended the meeting at the Spiritualists' Camp on the same day, not one of whom—as far as the writer is informed—was either sick or has exhibited any symptoms of mental derangement?* What sort of logic is that which draws a general and most sweeping conclusion from a solitary exceptional case in ten thousand? If you should discover a dwarf in Hulmeville, only thirty inches high, would you straightway seize upon him as the only proper illustration of the average stature of the citizens of Bucks County? Of course you would not; and yet in your vain attempt to determine the character and influence of Spiritualism your assumption seems to the rational mind no less illogical and absurd.

But this lame logic and manifest injustice to Spiritualists does not terminate here. The moral sense and philosophy of some opposers is as defective as their logic. The enemies of the great Truth, which has already filled the world with its presence, are also accustomed to search diligently for a profane and reckless brother in the faith, or some morally slipshod sister; and when they have found one, they make haste to determine the moral character of the whole Spiritual Brotherhood, by one such individual example. If one finds a horse thief in town, is he to be taken as an infallible index to the moral *status* of the whole community? The Episcopal Church is believed to be made up of very respectable people. Of course, we may reasonably look for occasional exceptions to all general rules; but one black sheep does not determine

the complexion of the whole flock. When it became necessary—some years ago—to depose Bishop Onderdonk for immoral conduct, no faithful disciple once thought of relinquishing his or her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, or deemed it necessary to inquire into the moral character and influence of the Episcopacy.

You seem to be shocked at the conduct of the Spiritualists in having the body of Mr. Twining removed from the ice, with a view of determining beyond a doubt whether his spirit had, or had not, finally departed. This was a very proper thing to do under the circumstances; and *the public authorities, everywhere, should forbid the burial of any and of all persons who die suddenly until there are signs of decomposition which cannot be mistaken.* For the same reason the remains in such cases should never be subjected to a very low or freezing temperature. Enlightened Spiritualists have some knowledge of the states resembling death, and it is natural that they should exercise more than ordinary caution. They are better informed on this subject than any other large class of our citizens. They know that the sudden interruption of sensation and voluntary motion is no certain indication of death; and that a state of suspended animation for several days has been followed—in many well authenticated examples—by complete restoration of all vital and voluntary powers. With this positive knowledge to awaken caution against premature burials, and to encourage hope in the possibility of a restoration, carelessness would be crime.

When will the press discontinue its passionate appeals to the prejudices of the ignorant, and calmly address the un-

derstanding of the more enlightened classes? This time-serving policy, which floats every great public question on the tide of popular impulses libels the truth, and is a disgrace to the civilization of the age. Let the old Error die and be buried out of sight, and let the new Truth stand undisguised in the unclouded sunshine and majesty of its own merits. It is only in this way that we may rationally expect to advance the real interests of the human race; and, believe me, Sir, sincere devotion to Humanity is the true service of God.

Trusting that you will permit me to address your readers, in behalf of a people numbering many millions in all civilized countries, whose independent thought and liberty of speech you gravely propose to abridge, I am, my dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, }
WARREN COUNTY, N. J., *Aug. 12, 1880.* }

TRUTH AGAINST ITS ENEMIES.

ANSWER TO THE AUTHOR OF A SPIRITUALISTIC TRAGEDY.

WRITTEN FOR THE PHILADELPHIA SUNDAY PRESS AND MIRROR.*

“Our castle's strength will laugh a siege to scorn.”—*Shakespeare*.

Misrepresentations of the Press—Mr. Twining's Case Again—Time-Serving Patrons of Error—Vulgar Ignorance and Prejudice—Opposition to New Ideas of Religion—Wise Sayings of a Spiritual Reformer—Death by Disease no Tragedy—Assumed Responsibility of J. W. Colville—The Patriarch's Ladder—Insanity and Orthodoxy—The Lunatic Demands a Vicarious Sacrifice—A real Tragedy in the Freeman Family—Critic's Opposition to Dancing—Examples from Sacred History—David Beats the Scotch in his Lively Reel—He Selects Another Man's Partner—Blunders in the Figure and Breaks one of the Commandments—Customs of the Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans—Solomon Sanctions Dancing—Celebrating the Prodigal Son's Return—Shallow Views of the Press and Mirror—This Critic Rivals the Teutonic Nursery Legends—A Christian Strives with “Faithful Abraham”—He Wins the Bloody Championship—Infamous Appeal to the Authorities—Editor of the Press and Mirror Disloyal to the Constitution.

To the Editor of the Press and Mirror :

I FIND a sensational article—credited to your paper and bearing the inappropriate title of “A Spiritualistic Tragedy”—floating through the channels of the press. It purports to be a narration of the facts in the case of the late WILLIAM TWINING—alleged to have been a believer in Spiritualism—who recently died at the Norristown Insane Asylum.

* This letter was sent to the *Sunday Press and Mirror* of Philadelphia, in September, 1880, but it did not appear in that paper. The proprietors claimed that the manuscript never reached its destination, and we cannot dispute the statement. It is here made public for the first time.

It is represented that Mr. Twining "began to show signs of delirium" on the evening of July 27th, and that on the morning of the 30th, less than three days thereafter, he expired. This article is a mischievous attempt to excite public prejudice against Spiritualism and a very numerous class of our citizens, and it is therefore calculated to generate and promote an unhealthy popular feeling and sentiment. In behalf of the very numerous people whose general character and principles are therein misrepresented and aspersed, I respectfully ask to be heard, and will occupy no more space in your columns than the case seems to require.

The fact that Mr. Twining's death occurred in less than three days after he first exhibited signs of mental derangement, certainly affords strong presumptive evidence that he died of some disease of the brain, which may have sustained no relation whatever to his belief in Spiritualism. *Cerebro-spinal meningitis* and other diseases, accompanied by irregular cerebration, frenzy, and madness are not confined to Spiritualists. The same forms of organic derangement occur in the experience of Pagans, Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, and Infidels; and no sane man who is not a bigot ever thinks of referring the cases to the peculiar religious or philosophical beliefs of such people. And then it is to be observed, that sudden deaths do not result from lunacy. A man may become a hopeless lunatic and not die for a quarter of a century, as the records of the asylums all over the world abundantly prove. No rational view or scientific diagnosis of the present case would be likely to attribute Mr. Twining's death to his acceptance of the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism. Had he either

died in communion with the Catholic Church, in full belief of the Thirty-nine Articles, or lost his balance of mind on the cardinal points of Calvinism, no one would have attributed his death to the influence of his faith. But he is said to have been a Spiritualist, and hence several impulsive scribblers rush into print with their railing accusations against the doctrine and the whole body of believers.*

Many people seem to imagine that they are serving the Lord by misrepresenting such of his children as entertain unpopular views on religious subjects. It is no part of their business to expose the pious frauds which flourish under the shadow of the Church, since powerful religious organizations, great wealth, and eminent learning have rendered these fashionable. What if the new views embrace an ever-living Gospel, which comes "in demonstration of the spirit" and with power to settle, and on a scientific basis, the great questions of our immortality and the endless progress of the soul? All this is insufficient to command the attention and respect of some men. The truth is spurned and trodden under foot as an unclean thing; and its inspired ministers may be despised, traduced and buffeted with impunity. On this subject an illustrious Spiritual Reformer, whom the Christian world long since deified, left his eloquent testimony as follows: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." (Matt. vii. 6.)

* We have already answered a similar though less malignant article, which appeared in the editorial columns of the *Delaware Valley Advance*—published at Hulmeville—of the date of the 5th of August, 1880.

The article credited to your journal misrepresents the case from the title to the last line. To characterize the death of Mr. Twining as "A Spiritualistic Tragedy," is to falsify the facts. Webster defines the word *tragedy*, as used in this connection, to be "*any event in which human lives are lost by human violence, more especially by unauthorized violence.*" Mr. Twining did not die in this manner. The mournful event was not, in any sense, the result of violence at the hands of any man. I speak as a physician when I say that *the facts warrant the conclusion that Mr. Twining died of a physical disease.* The writer in the *Press and Mirror* gives a loose rein to his imagination, when he assumes that an unpleasant responsibility attaches to Mr. Colville and others who are accused of assuring the unfortunate Mr. Twining that "he was Christ, and one day, not far distant, he would become the leader of all Spiritualists." That either Mr. Colville, or any other real medium, or any rational believer in Spiritualism, ever gave such assurance to any man, will not be credited for a moment by any person who has any just claims to ordinary candor and intelligence. Here we again encounter the same "lying spirit" of exaggeration, which assumes a case of inflammation of the brain to be a "tragedy," and calls the ten or fifteen thousand respectable people assembled at Neshaminy Falls, "*a tramping band!*"

The bigoted author of this article would never have characterized the attendants upon a Methodist camp-meeting in this manner. He knows that it will not pay to dip his pen in gall to abuse a large denomination of Christians; and he will perhaps live long enough to learn that the Spiritualists

outnumber any Protestant sect in Christendom. The time may not be far off when this unnumbered people will possess the moral power to command respect at the hands of the unscrupulous scribes who now so grossly misrepresent their real character, and the essential principles of that divine philosophy, which not only covers all our present relations and interests, but is

“ — the Patriarch’s ladder, reaching heaven,
And bright with beckoning Angels.”

It was only recently that Mr. Twining became interested in Spiritualism, and his mind seems to have been still under the dominating influence of the dogmas of the Church. This plainly appears from the following statement which I extract from your correspondent’s letter :

“ He made known to his family his belief that he was Christ himself. As this spell took a more firm hold of the unfortunate man, he said : ‘ I must shed somebody’s blood in order to prepare myself for the work I have to perform.’ He made an attempt on his brother, and came near choking him before his hold could be broken.”

Here it is evident that the disordered mind of the patient was chiefly influenced by the “ Evangelical doctrine ” of the “ vicarious atonement,” which, I may venture to say, is not believed by one Spiritualist in a thousand. This popular theological notion of the “ vicarious sacrifice ” of an innocent person, being uppermost in his mind, governed his determination, and hence he conceived the shedding of blood to be an indispensable preliminary to the accomplishment of his mission. Why then may we not ascribe his violent conduct and destructive propensity to the fatal influence of the cardinal

doctrine of the popular theology? Had he actually killed his brother, it would not have been the first instance of a Christian lunatic offering a bloody sacrifice on the altar of his religion. There have been many such examples ;* but faith in the doctrine is still insisted on as essential to the salvation of the soul.

The writer in your paper further characterizes the daily exercises at the Neshaminy Grove meeting as “these objectionable goings on,” and then concludes his vituperative epistle in the following paragraph :

“The inconsistency of the delusion is the fact that the entire proceedings are a mockery. After the preaching is over, dancing is indulged in twice a week in one of the pavilions erected for the purpose. All their quotations are taken from the Bible, and during the delivery of a sermon they have flowers arranged in the trees, held in place by wires or invisible strings, which are represented to the crowd as having fallen from heaven. Of course this is all trickery, and should be easily seen through. As these people are doing much evil, it behooves the authorities to disband them at once, otherwise more innocent farmers may die in a strait jacket.”

This daily sermonizing and the “dancing twice a week”—always after the preaching is over—is, we may suppose, what constitutes the “inconsistency” and mockery of “the delu-

* The public mind has scarcely recovered from the terrible shock occasioned by that most revolting example in the Freeman family, of Massachusetts. It was not suspected that any “spiritualistic” idea or teaching led to this *real tragedy*. No, it was the influence of the dogmatic theology of the so-called Evangelical Religion. Freeman had a supreme respect for the “infallible authority” of the Bible, and believed in an orthodox creed. To show his reverence for that authority, and to make his peace with the God of Abraham, he determined to emulate the Patriarch, who is said to have offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice to the Lord ; and so the crazy father actually slaughtered his own little daughter with the consent and approbation of the mother who bore her.

sion." If this is really an incongruous association of ideas and exercises, it must be admitted that the dancing part of the performance, at least, has been indulged in for a very long time. It has an ancient history, inwrought with the religious ideas and festivals of all the earlier nations. In the one hundred and forty-ninth Psalm the pious Hebrew minstrel calls upon "the congregation of the saints" to "sing unto the Lord a new song," and he adds, "*Let them praise his name in the dance.*" It is also related in sacred history that when the ark of the covenant was brought into the holy city, "*David danced before the Lord with all his might.*" (II Sam. vi. 14.) It is true that David made some mistakes in balancing to another man's partner, crossing over and going "down the outside" of the Ten Commandments! But the Lord—unlike your hypocritical correspondent—*does not appear to have taken serious offense at David's style of dancing.* Indeed, this formed an important part in the religious rites and worship of both the Hebrews and Egyptians. The polished Greeks followed their example, refining the festal and religious ceremonies of the people, and the Romans profited by imitating the Greeks. That dancing was included in the religious exercises of the Christian Church, for more than one thousand years, is a fact proved by authentic history, while it is not so evident that the modern Church has improved upon the customs of the fathers. I copy the following passage from a learned author:

"If we may believe Scaliger, the early bishops of the Church were styled *presules*, because (as the word literally implies) they led off the dance at their solemn festivals; and this practice continued in the Church till the twelfth century."—(W. T. BRANDE, F. R. S. L.)

Where, then, is the "inconsistency" in dancing as well as

preaching, at the proper time, and "in one of the pavilions erected for the purpose?" "A mockery" of religion to dance! Why, this secular scribe makes war on the Bible, and he complains that Spiritualists quote altogether too much Scripture! Is the man who says this wiser than the wisest? O dishonored shade of Solomon! Do we not read in thy divinely inspired word that for "everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens," including "a time to laugh, . . . and a time to dance?" (Ecclesiastes iii. 3-8.)

When the prodigal returned to his father's house his envious and ill-tempered brother was at work in the field, and was not consulted as to the propriety of killing "the fatted calf." This excited his displeasure, "and as he came and drew nigh to the house he heard *music and dancing*." That was too much for his equanimity, and—like the petulant scribe in the *Press and Mirror*—he was angry and would not go in. (Luke chap. xv.) Is there not something about your correspondent to remind one of the irascible brother of the Prodigal Son? There may be no resemblance in either form, feature, or complexion. The fancied likeness may be confined to what the French call the *esprit*, which is so powerful alike in determining both the momentary expression and the general demeanor. Instead of going in to the great Spiritual entertainment, where he might possibly find something to live on, and a remedy for his leanness and meanness of soul, he is angry and stays outside to nurse his displeasure. The thousands at the feast are rejoicing in the great liberty and the new life of a present inspiration, while he directs the finger of scorn at the guests and defames the faithful disciples of the truth.

The man who is credulous enough to believe that the shallow devices described by the writer in the *Mirror*—the “flowers arranged in the trees,” and the wire-pulling to produce a shower of floral offerings “from heaven”—were practiced from day to day and for weeks, before thousands of intelligent ladies and gentlemen, all of whom were either deceived or deceiving, must be the very man to supplement the Teutonic legends of “Jack and the Beanstalk,” and that other adventurous John of giant-killing fame—all by the amazing power of his own fertile imagination. To such a juvenile mind a nursery tale of fiction may have more weight than the demonstrative facts of Spiritualism.

The author of “A Spiritualistic Tragedy” closes his work by an appeal to the local authorities to disband the Spiritualists at once, and for no other reason but that a man, not half converted to their views, died suddenly from some physical disease which affected his brain and deranged his mind. Where was this writer of fiction when poor Freeman—striving with Abraham for the championship in the bloody demonstration of his faith—butchered his innocent little child? We did not hear from him at that time. True, it was a case to excite the compassion of the hardest heart. He may have been shocked, for aught we know, by the terrible tragedy; but as the perpetrator was known to be orthodox in his faith, your correspondent was silent and made no sign. Nor did any other lunatic propose to “disband” the Christian Church! Now, however, he calls aloud for prompt and decisive action on the part of the public “authorities.” He would have a people numbering millions deprived of their religious liberty!

He insists that Spiritualists and their public proceedings—described in his elegant phraseology as “these objectionable goings on”—should be squelched immediately and forever; “otherwise more innocent farmers may die in a strait jacket.” But the authorities did not respond to this importunate appeal. They have learned, no doubt—what this man has evidently failed to discover—that they live in a free country and under a government that tolerates independent thought and all systems of religion.

We close by congratulating the man who libels us, on his being privileged to enjoy the priceless blessings of our liberal institutions. It is fortunate indeed for those who are thus disloyal to the Constitution and laws of their country, that they live under a government which is so much better than they really deserve.

“Who shames a scribbler, breaks a cobweb through.”

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY,
WARREN COUNTY, N. J., *Sept. 25, 1880.* }

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS CRITICS.

AN UNJUST CRITICISM OF MR. HENRY KIDDLE REVIEWED.

FROM THE GATE CITY, KEOKUK, IOWA.*

The late Superintendent of Schools—A Critic's offensive Misrepresentations—Mr. Kiddle was never Crazy—He was not Removed—A most efficient Man Resigned an Important Place—The Question of Scholarship—An Editor's Distress about Syntax—The Untitled Journalist versus a Master of Arts—Men who are Paid to write bad English—The Josh Billings School—How Charity is illustrated at Gate City.

To the Editor of The Gate City :

SIR : Having accepted the appointment—in the special interest of liberal principles—of Corresponding Editor-at-large, I take the liberty, in the discharge of the duties assigned to me, to address you in reference to the following paragraph, which appeared in the editorial department of your paper, under date of the 9th instant :

“ Mr. Henry Kiddle was Superintendent of the public schools of New York. He became a crazy Spiritualist last year and lost his position, and is very angry about it. He presided at a meeting of Spiritualists last week, and made a furious speech of abuse of everybody and all papers and preachers that won't see heaven's truth in the twaddle and bad grammar drived upon a suffering world by professed spirits at *séances*. Mr. Kiddle really needs to be judged very charitably. There is something the matter with his head and he doesn't know it.”

* This letter was published in *The Gate City*, Jan. 28, 1880. In the order of time it would have found its proper place among the earlier contents of this volume, had it not been overlooked. The particular place assigned to it is, however, a matter of little consequence.

I do not allow myself to presume for a moment that you have any wish to use your columns to the injury of any individual, much less that you would intentionally mislead the public mind. In the absence of any conclusive evidence to the contrary, I am bound to presume that you intend to conduct your paper with a view to the dissemination of correct intelligence on all subjects that come within the range of modern journalism. Trusting that you would wish to be correctly informed on all matters that fall within the scope of your daily commentary on current ideas and passing events, I take the liberty to forward this communication for publication in your columns.

Permit me to say that you were never more mistaken in your life than in what you are pleased to affirm in respect to the late Superintendent of the public schools of this City. Of this fact it would be no difficult task to satisfy any man who—with a mind open to conviction—has the capacity to reason and the discrimination to measure the force of evidence. In a further and more analytical reference to your paragraph I remark :

1. Mr. Henry Kiddle did not become crazy last year. His faculties never have been thus deranged at any time. That he was not adjudged by our Board of Education to be crazy, is evident from the fact that he continued to discharge all the duties of his most important position to the last hour of his term of office. No fair minded person here pretends to dispute the fact that he exhibited the same mental and moral equipoise to the last ; nor was he less efficient in the conscientious discharge of every duty to his subordinates and every

obligation to the public. It may fairly be questioned if any man ever resigned an important office in this City who carried with him into his retirement a larger measure of public respect and confidence ; nor can we point to one who was more beloved by the large, intelligent, and influential class of people who were at once subject to his authority and governed by his wisdom.

2. Mr. Kiddle did not "lose his position," and was never "very angry about it." On the contrary, in the most dispassionate manner he resigned his office, and he has never, to this day, exhibited the slightest ill feeling toward those who favored his removal, so far as the facts are known to the present writer. There was no little discussion about requesting Mr. Kiddle to recall his resignation, in the course of which a number of the more influential members of the Board of Education emphatically expressed their undiminished confidence in his unequalled ability for the place, and his unwavering fidelity to the sacred trust reposed in him. The opinion found expression long ago, and is still widely entertained, that if the late Superintendent had not resigned he would have been in the same office to-day.

3. Mr. Kiddle never made "a furious speech ;" on the contrary, he always speaks with calmness and deliberation. He did not "abuse everybody ;" more especially editors and preachers who "won't see heaven's truth in twaddle and bad grammar." Mr. Kiddle's grammar will compare favorably with that of the most distinguished of his assailants. He has received the degree of Master of Arts, and well understands the principles which determine the relations of thought to

speech, or the art of philological expression. We can assure you that he is far more familiar with the rules of syntax, or the principles of grammatical construction, than the average journalist. We cannot discount the just claims of this gentleman to scholarship, because he may choose—like a faithful amanuensis—to correctly report the language of parties who may be pleased to converse with him on some important subject. Our most popular authors and men of acknowledged genius do this; and what is more, they put ungrammatical and frequently very bad language into the mouths of fictitious characters of their own creation. We have some authors who have reduced the business of writing bad English to a system. Josh Billings, for example, actually receives not less than two or three thousand dollars per annum for a weekly contribution of half a column to a single New York journal. And what have the hypocritical opposers of Spiritualism to say about it? Not a word to justify the inference that they regard this business as at all reprehensible. They seem to approve of “twaddle and bad grammar,” when these things command a high price. Indeed, some newspaper men value these baser elements in our journalistic literature so highly that they are quite willing to *steal them*, and the papers far and near appropriate what Josh writes without one word of objection to his systematic prostitution of the language.

4. You are pleased to say that “Mr. Kiddle really needs to be judged very charitably.” But where shall he go to obtain such a righteous judgment? It will hardly do to travel toward Keokuk where so many oblique statements to his disparagement can be crowded through the *Gate City*

in a single editorial paragraph. Now here are some of the more essential characteristics of charity, as defined by a Christian Apostle : " Charity suffereth long and is kind ; * * * charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, * * * is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Where shall we look for a conspicuous illustration of this charity, the exercise of which, in your opinion, is so much needed in behalf of our late Superintendent ? When is that heavenly guest expected out West ? True, we know of nothing in the case of Mr. Kiddle that calls for any special exhibition of charity ? No one need rend the white mantle the angels let down out of heaven, by any spasmodic attempts to cover this new and worthy disciple of a living inspiration and an everlasting gospel. If we can but find this mantle somewhere under the sun, we know that its ample folds are sufficiently broad to encircle all of us—and still, we may hope, leave enough to cover the GATE CITY.

Yours respectfully,

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, }
NEW YORK, *Jan.*, 1880. }

DEAD LETTER OF DOCTOR GRAVES.

MAGNETISM, CLAIRVOYANCE, AND DEMONISM.

FROM THE VAN BUREN (ARK.) PRESS, OCT. 16, 1880.

Dr. Graves Visits Charles Foster—Dr. Samuel Watson's Lectures—Moving of the Waters—Ithuriel and Zephon—Commission from Gabriel—Satan in Mischief—Arrested by the Heavenly Detectives—Resurrection at Memphis—Mistakes of the Spirits—Mr. Greeley's Chiromancy—Heterodox Spirits—What Dr. Graves does not Know—Mesmer at the Court of Louis XVI.—Professorship of Animal Magnetism at Berlin—Cuvier, Laplace, Humboldt, Coleridge, Dugald Stewart, and Galvani—Relations of Vital Magnetism to Psycho-physiology—Power of Will over Magnetic Sensitives—Limitations of the Wonder-working Agent—Clairvoyance Explained—Invisible Psychological Operators—Dr. Graves on "Demonism"—"Hark, from the Tombs!"—Demonology of the Ancient Greeks and Modern Spiritualists.

"How commentators each dark passage shun,
And hold their farthing candle to the sun."

—Young.

Editor of the Van Buren Press :

I AM indebted to one of your citizens for a copy of your journal, containing a letter from Rev. Dr. G. R. Graves, descriptive of the method and results of his investigation at a single *séance* with Mr. Foster, the well-known test-medium. This occurred long ago, and the letter was originally published in the *Memphis Appeal*, in January, 1873. The *Press* compliments Mr. Graves, by saying that he is "one of the most distinguished divines in the United States."

It appears that our venerable brother, Rev. Dr. Samuel Watson, has been giving lectures in the Southwest on the one

universal gospel of Spiritualism, and that his demonstrative facts and cogent reasonings have stirred the elements of the effete theologies, and deeply moved the souls of their defenders. It seemed to be necessary that some one should meet the Southern champion of the New Dispensation, who had so deeply wounded the adversary. The presence of one so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of truth as Dr. Watson is known to be, could scarcely fail to discover the enemy, and leave him naked for the world's observation. According to Milton, Ithuriel and Zephon, two bright and heavenly detectives, were sent—under a celestial commission from Gabriel—to search all Paradise for Satan (the adversary), and they found him; precisely how and where is thus described in the language of the poet :

“ Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams ;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 The animal spirits. . . .
 Him thus intent, Ithuriel with his spear
 Touched lightly, for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns,
 Of force, to its own likeness.”

Some one was wanted to break the spear of Ithuriel; but there was no valiant spirit incarnate at Van Buren, in Arkansas, who could give assurance of his ability to resist the “touch of celestial-tempered” weapons. And when no one was found worthy of Bro. Watson's steel, it came to pass that they explored Memphis, and *resurrected this dead letter of Graves!* This might suffice to dull the weapons of all ordi-

nary warfare, but it is powerless to either blunt that celestial spear, or turn the edge of "the sword of the spirit."

Seriously, while Mr. Graves's letter is no doubt a conscientious statement of the details of his very limited experience, it is mainly devoid of interest. There is nothing offensive in its spirit; and *there is nothing in it to shake the confidence of the feeblest disciple in a single fact or principle of Spiritualism.* Indeed, the opposition is so weak and shaky that if it had a soul to feel, it would certainly move us to compassion. It is proper to observe that Mr. Graves was not satisfied with the results of his interview. The spirits made several mistakes in respect to matters of fact, names, etc. George Snider claimed to be in the Spirit-world an hour after the doctor had dined with him. A spirit assuming to be his wife stumbled on her middle name; and it is said that her chirography "looked as if it might have been written by Horace Greeley;" and, he adds—by way of explanation—"was written backward and bottom upward." The most remarkable thing in this connection is, if the spirit's chirography so much resembled Horace Greeley's, that he, Dr. Graves, should be able to determine whether it was really inverted or right side up.

Another grave objection is found in the fact of his discovery that *spirits are not orthodox*, but favor—to use his own language—"the doctrine of the universal salvation of all." This may be slightly tautological; and we are left to infer that if the Spirits will consent to compromise on *the universal salvation of a very limited number*, their doctrine will be more acceptable to "this most distinguished divine." If they will only join the church, take a slip and pay for it, and liberally

“Deal damnation 'round the land”

on all whom they judge to be the enemies of God, they will soon get a fair hearing before our religious society, and their teachings may come to be respected as the precious revelations of infinite love and heavenly wisdom.

There is nothing further in Mr. Graves's letter to either arrest attention or invite comment, except what is embraced in his concluding paragraph, which I copy as follows :

“I wish to say to your readers that this test interview confirmed me in the positions I have heretofore presented to the public, that animal mesmerism has much to do with Mr. Forster's performances, clairvoyance some, and demonism will account for the rest. He performs some unaccountable things, I must confess.* The bloody writing on the back of his hand is by far the greatest ; but much connected with Spiritualism that was deemed miraculous a few years ago is now explained, since magnetism and mesmerism have come to be understood, and so the blood-writing may be in years to come.”

Rev. J. R. Graves, D.D., of the Baptist Church, aspires to something like originality when he attempts to treat of “*animal mesmerism*.” True, a little more than a century ago, F. Antoine Mesmer, of the Medical faculty of Vienna, attracted considerable attention to the phenomena of animal or human magnetism, which he used as an auxiliary in his practice of medicine. Ten years later the French Academy appointed a committee to inquire into the subject ; but failing to feel, see, taste, smell, measure or weigh the subtle and wonder-working

* After assuming to account for all the facts by attributing some to mesmerism, others to clairvoyance, and the *rest* (this comprehends all that remains) to demonism, he is obliged to “confess” that there are “some unaccountable things.” To evade the force of these he takes a leap into the darkness of conjecture and expects others to follow him.

fluid which Mesmer supposed to exist, the committee reported that there was no such thing as "Animal Magnetism." But the facts continued to multiply and command attention in different parts of Europe. Cuvier, Laplace, Humboldt, Cole-ridge, Dugald Stewart, and many other distinguished names became identified with the new science. In 1831 its claims to a place among the accredited sciences were duly acknowledged in the report of the scientific commission, appointed, if I mistake not, in 1825. Skepticism reluctantly gave up the ghost. The invisible, pain-destroying agent was at length admitted into the hospitals of Paris and London, and a Professorship of Animal Magnetism was established in the Medical College of Berlin.*

But there is no proper reason for giving names of persons to the great principles of Nature. I recall but one other notable example in which this is done. The electricity generated or disengaged by chemical action, is called Galvanism, in honor of the Bologna anatomist and physiologist, Galvani. But we might as well call electricity in another form, *Franklinism*—because the American philosopher experimented in the science, and is credited with demonstrating the identity of lightning and electricity—as apply the name of the Vienna Doctor to the subtle electro-magnetism of animal and human bodies. We do not name Gravitation after either Kepler or

* The discoveries of Mesmer and his dexterous use of the power, gave him an enviable position and a commanding influence. He had many distinguished pupils in Paris, received large sums for his course of instruction, and was professionally employed by the principal nobles at the court of Louis XVI.—See the author's Philosophical Treatise entitled Man and his Relations, Chap. II.

Newton. We never speak of Geology as Lyellism, nor is astronomy made to bear the name of some Chaldean shepherd, an Egyptian priest, Ptolemy, Copernicus, Galileo, or any modern scientist. For want of a better name, we may call the agent referred to by Rev. Dr. Graves, *Vital Magnetism*, to indicate that the subtle principle belongs essentially to *life*, and is peculiar to the forms of animated nature.

And what does Mr. Graves know about vital, animal, or human magnetism? Evidently very little; not enough to either enable him to give us a proper definition of the words, or to characterize the principle, by the use of appropriate terms. Now, what are the powers of Vital Magnetism? Under the direction of human intelligence it is capable of producing a great variety of physiological and psychological phenomena, on and through the bodies and minds of susceptible persons. It may exercise supreme control over sensation and voluntary motion; influence all the involuntary functions and processes of the living body—by accelerating or retarding molecular, chemical, arterial and cerebral action—so as to arrest disease and restore the vital equilibrium, when, from any cause, it may have been temporarily interrupted. This command of the nervous circulation enables the operator to govern the distribution of the animal fluids; to excite and subdue all the passions of human nature; and to determine the specific character of the impressions made upon the brain and the mind of the subject through the nerves of general and special sensation. In many cases the skillful exercise of this power is sufficient to chain the strongest man; to greatly intensify and wholly suspend sensibility in the subject; to allay nervous

irritability, to remove pain and induce sleep ; to stimulate thought, and to inspire dreams and visions ; while, here and there, it lifts the veil of our mortality and reveals the invisible world to the conscious soul.

What are the natural and inevitable limitations of this peculiar power ? On this question all thoughtful observers must agree. The first or cardinal fact which arrests the attention of every scientific investigator is that *the several phases of the phenomena are restricted to the forms of human and animal existence*. The unorganized elements of matter, the forms and substances of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms—in short, all the objects of the inanimate creation, are beyond the reach of this agent. Vital magnetism can not read and spell ; it can not teach the ignorant ; it can not rap on a table ; it will not move a boulder ; it rings no bells beyond our reach ; it never lifts any ponderable body ; it does not unlock doors, either with or without keys ; it is not able to play on musical instruments ; it is neither a poet, an orator, nor a metaphysician ; it does not draw portraits, and never quotes Scripture. Vital Magnetism is dumb, and will not account for the mysterious voices ; Magnetism is destitute of sensibility, and cannot be insulted ; Magnetism is blind, and can no more see what is in our minds than electricity, hydrogen gas, or common air can be expected to exercise this function of sentient being.

Can Clairvoyance perform any of the things embraced in the foregoing specification ? I answer, *it enables its possessor to clearly perceive what is passing in the human mind*. Beyond this it is utterly powerless to produce any one of the results

or effects above specified. The term is compounded of two French words, *clair*, clear, and *voyant*, to see. The faculty being *subjective and passive*, can exert no possible influence on outward objects. *It is the gift of spiritual perception*—or the power of *inward sight*—by which we clearly discern things beyond the range of ordinary vision ; creatures too minute to be perceived through these mortal instruments of sight ; and the beings who are rendered invisible on account of the extreme sublimation of the elements which enter into their composition and structure—*the forms of the Spirit-World*. Of course Clairvoyance can no more move an object, or produce a sound, than the faculty of natural vision exercised through the physical organs. Every child knows that he may gaze all day at the natural and artificial objects outside of the school-room, and never move one of them a hair's breadth.

It is true that the human mind, acting through the delicate and powerful agency of animal electricity or vital magnetism, may produce very remarkable effects on the constitutions of men and animals ; *but that power is forever restricted to creatures endowed with sensation and voluntary motion*. Made potent as possible by the utmost effort of the human will, it is still powerless to influence the inanimate creation. It could never bend a blade of grass, stir a single leaf in the forest, ripple the waters of a waveless pool, nor check the movement of the most delicate chronometer. The psychological phenomena which depend on the executive power of the mind—concentrated on the sensitive subject, and acting through the subtle magnetism of the living body—may be produced agreeably to the same psychological laws, by minds in the flesh and

in the spirit. Other things being equal, the mind that is no longer subject to mortal limitations may be able to produce the more remarkable effects, and for the reason that *the unfettered spirit may more completely interpenetrate the whole body and mind of the subject.*

Here let me observe that whether the operator be visible or invisible, the phenomena depend on the same general laws of mind and matter, and the effects are by no means dissimilar, either in their essential nature or their superficial aspects. Whether in or out of the body, the human mind is possessed of the same faculties, affections and susceptibilities, and the effects it is capable of producing on kindred natures in this world have, therefore, not only a common origin, but a mutual likeness. Let it be remembered that wherever we witness the illustrations of this power, we have the evidence that there exists an inspiring mind somewhere; and rational Spiritualists are not accustomed to refer the phenomena to invisible agents, when a visible operator can be discovered.

Every enlightened Spiritualist knows there are numberless examples in which it is not only impossible to find the psycho-magnetic operator within the sphere of visible existence, but the conditions and circumstances are such as to preclude the hypothesis of a mundane origin. In all such cases, the rational mind has no alternative but to look *within the veil* for the intelligent actors who direct the shifting scenes in the divine drama of our mortal and spiritual existence.

There is nothing remaining of this writer's assumptions but the *demonology* to which he refers all the manifestations which are not produced by what he calls "animal mesmerism" and

clairvoyance. We have already illustrated the nature and scope of these alleged sources of the phenomena, showing by reference to their limitations that they can only by a possibility be made to cover a small part of the facts of Spiritualism. All that remain are attributed to "demonism." If by demons the gentleman has reference to an assumed separate order of intelligent beings—neither men nor gods, but devoted to the work of infernal mischief—I deny the existence of any such beings in either heaven, earth or hell. If this is the accepted hypothesis, the Rev. Dr. Graves cannot decline the *onus probandi*; and we know very well that no evidence can be derived from either fact, law, or reason to support such an assumption.

But if the gentleman accepts the alternative idea or conception of the nature of demons, as entertained by the ancient Greeks, namely, *that they were the spirits of departed human beings, and that the word does not express or otherwise indicate the inherent qualities and moral character of the beings to whom it was applied*, then there can be no further controversy. This is indeed the only view which can be triumphantly defended, and it involves a concession to the Spiritualists of the whole ground of this controversy. The Greeks believed in both celestial and terrestrial demons, or pure and impure souls of men, and their continued influence in human affairs; and the Spirits of our time exhibit all degrees of human intelligence and moral elevation which we find among men.

It is commonly assumed by the clergy that the word demon necessarily represents an *evil* spirit, when every classical scholar should know that the sense in which the original word

was used by the Greeks furnishes no warrant for such an assumption. This appears to be one of the devices of modern theologians for upholding the dogmas of the Church. Every well educated clergyman knows that the word *dæmon* was originally applied to the saints and heroes who were deified by the ancient Greeks. They were spirits of men who were thus honored by being elevated to the rank of the gods. The apotheösis conferred divine rights on those who were distinguished for superior wisdom, heroic achievement, and the eminent virtues which exalt and glorify human life. To such an extent were they supposed to exert a beneficent influence in advancing the interests of mankind that they were regarded as objects of adoration. Homer seems to have viewed them as belonging to the divine societies, and Hesiod represents their influence as "peaceful and favorable to man." The great souls of the golden age were represented as *dæmons* of the most exalted rank.

In attempting to enlighten the cold skepticism of the religious world on the subject of Spiritualism—if I may be permitted to slightly modify the words of the poet—Mr. Graves is about

" As much at issue with the summer day
As if he brought his taper out of doors."

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, }
WARREN Co., N. J., *Sept.* 30, 1880. }

THE DEATH PENALTY.

ARGUMENT FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF SOCIETY.

FROM THE DAILY TIMES, HARTFORD, CONN., OCT. 13, 1880.

The *Herald* and the Death Penalty—Criminal Code and the Law-making Power—The Dangerous Classes—Capital Punishment Unchristian—Is Moses our Law-giver?—Revenge is not Justice—Relations of the Individual to the State—Philosophy of Democratic Government—Assumed and Dangerous Prerogatives—The State has no Right to take Life—Law makes the Public a Cowardly Assassin—Logic of the Duello—The Homicide's Defense—Sacredness of Human Life—Society's False Plea of Self-preservation—Naked Fallacy Exposed—Same Moral Law Applies to the Citizen and the Republic—Solemn Mockery of a Religion of Love—Behold the Sacrilegious Incongruities!—Praying for our Enemies in the Insulted Name of Jesus—Growing Hemp and Building Gibbets—The Sacrament and the Execution—Grim, Ghastly, and Terrible Spectacle!

The Lex Scripta is the collective will of the People.—*Brittan.*

To the Editor of the Times :

FROM an editorial article in the *New York Herald*, under the title of "Balbo and the Governor"—published just after the execution of the former—I am led to conclude that the editors of that journal are among the great number of humane and thoughtful people who, while they feel bound to respect the law as the formulated expression of the popular will, do not approve of the Death Penalty. This conclusion may be fairly drawn from the following passage :

"The *Herald* believes, with thousands of thoughtful people, that a criminal can be used to better purpose than is possible after he has been strangled with a rope ; but the majority of our law-makers do not, otherwise the law allowing sentence of death would be changed."

Comparing this significant statement with its earlier treat-

ment of the same general topic, more especially with the views expressed in an article on the "Methods of Capital Punishment," in the *Herald* of July 31, 1874--which lies before me—I am pleased to witness the change which appears to have resulted from the additional experience and observation of the last six years. This pleasure is augmented by the reflection that the *Herald* is regarded as a model newspaper, and generally accepted as a reliable interpreter of the popular feeling and thought. The extract contains the suggestion that *our criminal code does not reflect the most enlightened views of human nature and the just prerogatives of the law-making power*. It is, indeed, quite too general to regard the unequal measure of individual responsibility; while it plainly overrides the solemn obligation of the State to respect the interests of all the people—*not excepting those unfortunate classes whose freedom the law must restrain*. These considerations do not appear to exert any high moral influence over the minds of legislators. Our law-makers are mostly taken from the legal profession and the ranks of successful politicians; and we may well question whether they fairly represent the average public sentiment on moral questions of such gravity as the present. Perhaps lawyers are not more distinguished than other people for a nice sense of reciprocal justice and religious obligation, and it is certain that politicians are rarely moral philosophers, who have either a clear perception of the secret springs of human conduct or a conscientious regard for the poor victims of our imperfect civilization.

The public authorities of New York recently put two men to death, under the forms of law and with the utmost deliber-

ation ; at the same time the ministers of religion commended their souls to the mercy of God in the insulted name of Jesus of Nazareth. To comprehend the full measure of this monstrous inconsistency it is necessary to recall the fact that this illustrious Teacher—whom the Church long since deified—while referring to the death penalty under the code of Moses, condemned the whole letter and spirit of the ancient judicial law, and declared that “*he came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.*” This grim and ghastly association of irreconcilable ideas and moral contradictions would present the most ridiculous farce in the world, if it did not unhappily involve the deepest of tragedies.

The law may have been strictly complied with in the execution of the two criminals referred to ; yet it was made to appear from the evidence that the criminal in the one case was a murderer by *accident* rather than by *design*—that his victim probably died from fright and *asphyxia*. In the other case, it would appear that the perpetrator of the deed was enraged to frenzy by the real or imaginary discovery that he had suffered a great wrong in his domestic relations. In such cases the injured party may unhappily be the victim of emotional insanity ; the public mind is often too much excited to reason calmly, and revenge is liable to usurp the throne of Justice. To restrain the wayward impulses of the people, the law invests the Governor of the State with the power to commute the punishment—to substitute a milder penalty—or to even pardon the offender, if he can find a justification for such an act of executive clemency. In conferring this discretionary power upon the chief magistrate, the authors of the

criminal code have presumed him to be too dispassionate in his nature, too wise in his judgment and firm in his supreme devotion to the right, to be deeply influenced by popular impulses. Unfortunately, few men, even among our superior magistrates, ever reach this moral elevation. Too many of them are swayed by the views of the common mind and the unreasoning passions of the hour ; and hence many men have suffered death because the power to temper justice by the exercise of mercy was lodged in the hands of some one who had not the moral strength to resist the popular clamor, and the honesty to imperil his own personal and political prospects by acting on his convictions. The threatened loss of power is

“ A scarecrow set to frighten fools away.”

Is it not time for an intelligent people to inquire into the assumed natural right to sacrifice the lives of capital offenders against the peace of civilized society, and to discover a moral basis for the law, if any such exists? It is the too common habit of the newspaper press to treat every man who lifts his voice against this relic of barbarian wickedness as if he were a sickly sentimentalist, whose morbid philanthropy takes no account of the principles of justice or the righteous demands of society. Nothing can be further from the truth than this characterization of the very numerous class of refined and cultivated people whose moral sense and religious convictions are shockingly outraged by every execution of a criminal.

I propose to deal with principles whilst I examine the argument for the Death Penalty, which is presumed to have a solid foundation in the constitution of society. I shall here

consider the question with especial reference to the relations of the individual to the State under our representative forms of government. It is confidently assumed, that the right to sacrifice life belongs to the community, and is derived from the very nature of the social compact. But this has never been made to appear from any logical course of reasoning. In the first place the relation existing between the individual and the civil government is not, strictly speaking, a compact. In a general sense *a compact is a covenant, containing expressed stipulations, established by mutual consent of individuals or nations*. It is not, however, by any voluntary arrangement (we except naturalized citizens in this statement), but rather by the accident of birth, that the relation of the individual to the State is determined. Should the nature of that relation not accord with his wishes, he must submit. True, it may be in his power to resist ; but opposition to the government may be regarded as treason. Some men possess the intellectual and physical ability to oppose for a time the execution of the laws ; but in the end—as it was in the days of Nero—“ they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” (Rom. xiii. 2.) As, therefore, a compact is properly an association of two or more parties—that is not involuntary or otherwise the result of accident, but the product of mutual conference and deliberate choice—it follows that the term does not correctly represent the nature of the relation existing between the individual and the nation.

Blackstone says : “ It is clear that the right of punishing crimes against the law of Nature, as murder and the like, is, in a state of nature, vested in every individual, since all are

by nature equal."* To assume that this right extends so far as to justify a second violation of the same law, is to abandon a sacred principle by adopting a kind of logic which may be best appreciated by the friends of the Death Penalty. Let us examine the foundation on which the State rests its claim. By what authority does it usurp Heaven's high prerogative in fixing arbitrary limits to human life ?

It is admitted that representative governments are indebted for their rightful authority to the people who institute them ; and that so far from possessing any absolute or independent powers, they derive all their just prerogatives from a surrender of certain rights and privileges before possessed by the individuals who compose the body politic. The rights of the nation are, therefore, only the rights of the citizens who together constitute the State. This is preëminently the case under a democratic government. Now, as no citizen can surrender to the civil authorities what he does not possess—and as no one is authorized to take his own life or that of his neighbor—the conclusion is inevitable that this is not the prerogative of the civil government, but of that Being who is the source of all life, and in whose hands are its issues forever.

I may further expose the fallacy of the reasoning by which it is attempted to justify the Death Penalty by a simple transposition in the form of the argument. It will be universally conceded that the Republic derives all its legitimate powers from the people ; and hence if the government has the right to destroy men's lives, the people must possess the same in-

* See the Author's Commentaries, tenth London edition, vol. iv., p. 7.

herent right in their individual capacity. This would furnish something like a logical apology for crime, and at the same time confer an air of respectability on the midnight assassin. On this ground the felonious homicide may take his stand and make a vigorous defense. If the right of the State to take life is admitted, and the democratic doctrine is maintained, that all its rights are derived from or conferred by the people, then it is only logical to conclude that man possesses this right as an individual. From these premises the duello can readily be justified, and any man who has murder in his heart may reason thus : “ I am one of the people, and hence—under the laws of Nature—have the right to take life ; and, since the State does not regard my wishes, I choose to exercise my natural right in person.” And is not this reasoning quite as good as that by which nations vindicate their bloody deeds ? You may easily impeach the morality of such a man, but can you dispute his logic ?

If any one is illogical enough to assume that men as individuals have not the right to take life, but that the people in their collective capacity have, I desire to know how many men must be associated before they acquire the authority to hang a man or cut off his head ? If it is a wicked outrage against the laws of Nature and of God for one man to put another man to death, the question to be answered is : *How many men must be engaged in the transaction to render killing at once a morally lawful punishment, and a legal, natural, and Divine institution ?* Will the advocates of strangulation and decapitation answer ?

The truth is, man as an individual has no such right. So-

ciety, being composed of individual members, cannot possess a right that is not integral in its constituent elements. Our executive, legislative, and judiciary powers have no such authority, for the plain and obvious reason that the sovereign people, whose creatures and servants they are, never possessed the right themselves. If, then, we attempt to defend this inhuman penalty, we may well consider whether our influence will not strengthen the hands of violent and lawless men. Any system of law and logic whereby the State may ostensibly justify its sanguinary deeds, will furnish an apology for the duelist, the suicide, and the homicide.

The law, which has for its object the preservation of human life, is founded on immutable principles. Murder has ever been regarded as the greatest outrage against the laws of Nature. *The crime consists in the sacrifice of life, while the criminality is not materially increased or diminished by the moral characteristics of the victim.* Much less does murder cease to be murder, intrinsically, because the killing is done under the forms of law. "*Thou shalt not kill*" is a law that is not merely recorded in one ancient Book, but it is indelibly inscribed in the moral economy of the world. It is a law of universal and perpetual obligation. To reconcile this law with the manner in which capital offenders are punished, it is only necessary to demonstrate that hanging a man until he is dead is not killing him! That law stands forever unrepealed on the statute book of the Almighty. No artificial circumstances, created by the social relations and political institutions of men, can suspend the everlasting obligation. No power of the Republic can repeal that law; no principles underlying the structure

of human governments can warrant this profane attempt to wrest from the Creator the issues of life. On the contrary, Nature and Deity everywhere speak in tones deep, solemn and impressive, to remind us of the everlasting inviolability of human life.

But I may be told that "Self-preservation is the first law of Nature," and that this applies to communities as well as individuals. This is cordially granted, but the fact furnishes no justification of the atrocious crimes of the State, which are defended alike by politicians, statesmen and divines, under the shallow assumption that society requires the bloody sacrifice for its protection. Are they less criminal who skulk behind the forms of law,

"And with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excuse their devilish deeds?"

Let us strip this fallacy of its frail disguise. When a citizen is maliciously assailed and in imminent danger of losing his life, he may resist unto death, and, in the common judgment of men, be held blameless. *But his right to make such resistance springs from the urgent necessity of the case, and it terminates the instant he is delivered from his peril.* If he fortunately disarms his assailant; if he succeeds in binding him, or otherwise in restraining his violence, there would remain—even under our imperfect laws—no justification for the infliction of personal injury. The right of the State must be measured by the same rule and restricted by the same rational limitations, since all the legitimate powers of a democratic government are derived from the people. When the lawless man is arrested in his mad career—fairly secured, so that he can do

no further mischief—the State has no reasonable excuse for deadly violence. Civilized society can restrain and control the dangerous classes without a resort to this savage policy. There is iron and granite enough in our everlasting hills to cover the Empire State with prisons and still leave enough to fence in the whole continent.

In the dishonored names of virtue and religion we abuse humanity. We profess to worship God, and yet disfigure and mutilate his image. In the interest of morality we grow hemp and build gibbets. We pray to the common Father of us all to “forgive us our trespasses,” while we have no mercy on his disobedient children. In the name of Justice we strangle penitent sinners whom God is said to have forgiven! With our poor conceptions of its righteous demands we do well to represent *Justice as blind*. When ignorance of human nature determines the terms of the law, as is the case in this country, and a perverted sense of justice governs its administration, who can see clearly? When the accredited teachers of morality and religion make a county sheriff, with a halter in his hand, a minister ordained of God, and the gallows a divine institution, who among the rank and file of mystified saints and sinners can be expected to exercise a cool and rational discrimination?

The higher law imperatively demands a modification of the *lex scripta loci*.

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, }
 WARREN CO., N. J., October, 1880. }

MEETING THE ENEMY.

CHARGES OF THE TABERNACLE PASTOR EXAMINED.

FROM THE BROOKLYN (N. Y.) DAILY EAGLE, NOV. 21, 1880.

Boanerges of the Modern Pulpit—Nuptials in Paradise—Dr. Talmage on Monogamy—He Charges Spiritualists with Free Love—Unfortunate Choice of a Theme—Is the Old Testament Opposed to Polygamy?—Scriptural Illustrations—Household of the Hebrew Prince, Abraham—Sarah, Hagar, and Keturah—The Poet-Minstrel of Israel—Seventeen Wives and Concubines—Royal Harem of Solomon—Worshipping the Gods of his Mistresses—Divine Certificate of his Moral Health—Humble Imitators at Salt Lake—Seraglio on the Bosphorus—A Gospel Shepherd in the Shades of the Cyprians—What Spiritualism Demands—Subordination of the Animal Appetites and Passions—What and Where are the “Carriion Crows?”—Beauties of the Turkish Harem—A Clergyman Testifies that they are the Daughters of Christian Parents—Orthodoxy and the Penitentiary—Falling from Grace—Prison Standard of Faith and Morals—Loose Screws in the Social Platform—Attempts to Identify Free Love and Spiritualism—Unclean Birds of Modern Babylon—Fowls that came to Roost but found no Rest—Presbyterianism and the Oneida Community—Saints Bankrupt in Righteousness—Spiritualism, the Angel Standing in the Sun—Consecration of the Home Life by a Layman—A Modest Spiritualist the most Effective Preacher—John Howard Payne, Author of “Sweet Home.”

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”—*Bible*.

To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle :

MY attention was recently called to the report of a discourse by Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, delivered in the Brooklyn Tabernacle on the first Sunday in October. The main object of the eccentric teacher seems to have been to arraign and denounce the enemies of the divine institution of monogamous marriage ; and so far it may be presumed that he fairly represents the general sentiments of all civilized nations. But there are several things in this loose harangue

which would invite severe criticism if they were only presented with some show of reason, or otherwise supported by the evidence of a single fact. It will be obvious to every logical mind that the giddy brain of this sensational preacher imposes no restraints upon a lawless tongue. Two things, however, lend a fictitious importance to what he may say. First, is the fact that he is the accepted religious instructor of a large society and congregation of people who profess the Christian religion ; and, Second, that his utterances obtain a much wider and more enduring expression through influential public journals. It is chiefly for these reasons that I am induced to notice this discourse, and these considerations alone must serve as my apology for asking space in your columns for this letter.

The preacher's exordium—describing the nuptials of Adam and Eve in Paradise—most resembles a rhapsodical prolusion by a mad poetaster, who mistakes the small pyrotechnics of his own disordered brains for a heavy rain of Promethean fire. The whole picture is worked up in what may be, for aught we know, a pre-raphaelite style. The wild beasts occupy the back room in Eden, and are on their best behavior before the new lord of creation, while the birds perform the grand *epithalamium* or nuptial song in proper time. (No cards.)

After this poetic rhapsody the preacher enters at once upon the solid work of his argument to prove that the Old Testament is at war with the practice of polygamy, and that the sacred writings of the Jews consistently support the sacredness of the divinely ordained institution of monogamy, or the marriage to only one wife. In attempting to prove this

from the book itself, and to defend some of its authors from the suspicion of being tainted with free love, the speaker is more earnest than convincing. Indeed, it must be admitted that our modern Boanerges, in popular parlance, undertakes a very heavy contract, but he evidently thinks he is equal to the task, and the real facts in the case do not appear to subject him to the least possible embarrassment. On this point his reasoning and complacency remind us of the peculiar logic and self-satisfaction of the Hibernian, who, having stated his theory of a certain subject, was told that the facts in the case proved the contrary, when he replied, "Bad luck to the facts, then." Dr. Talmage attaches a similar importance to his own naked assumptions, and never suspects that facts susceptible of the clearest demonstration as effectually explode his hollow pretensions as a shot from a columbiad would demolish a chicken-coop.

It is true that the most illustrious of the Hebrew patriarchal princes, faithful Abraham, had not only Sarah for his wife, but two concubines, namely, Hagar and Keturah—wives of inferior rank, whose offspring could claim no lawful inheritance in the father's estate. Not to speak of the inferior personages, whose lives are a subject of record in the Jewish Scriptures, we may mention the fact that David had seven wives and ten concubines. The latter he left as mistresses of the royal palace when, during the conspiracy of his son Absalom, he fled, with bare feet, from the Holy City, over Mount Olivet, the king and his attendants, with bowed and covered heads, "weeping as they went" their way. (II. Sam., chap. xv.) And yet "the Lord God of Israel" is represented as

speaking of him after his death as "my servant David, who kept my commandments and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes." (I. Kings, xiv. 8.) Then Solomon—according to the catechism, the wisest of men—had no less than "seven hundred wives," princesses who, the pious Alexander Cruden—author of the "Complete Concordance of the Holy Scriptures"—tells us, "all lived in the quality of queens," and "three hundred concubines"—one thousand in all.

It is written in the First Book of Kings that this wise man "loved many strange women;" also, that "it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods." The history shows that he erected altars in high places and worshiped the gods of his mistresses, including the bloody Moloch, chief divinity of the Ammonites, to whom human sacrifices were offered in the valley of Hinnom or Tophet. Perhaps we ought not to be surprised that Solomon went after and supported the grossest abominations of the surrounding heathen tribes. A man with so many queens and women of inferior rank to keep his house would be more than human if he did not do something desperate to entertain the court and divert his own mind from the miseries of his situation. In his senile imbecility we might naturally expect that he would be as likely to worship one god as another. Yet the Lord is represented as bearing testimony to the unimpeachable wisdom of Solomon in these words: "Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." (I. Kings, chap. iii.)

In respect to his free love proclivities and the number of his wives, Solomon has certainly had his peers in these latter days. True, our own Joseph Smith and Brigham Young are only vulgar imitators of a regal prototype, following at a respectable distance, and subject to the embarrassing conditions and circumstances of our own improved civilization. But the Grand Turk at Constantinople has sometimes had more wives than even "Solomon in all his glory." In the reign of several of the sultans—within the present century—the imperial harem has included from fifteen hundred to two thousand beautiful young women, all slaves, and sacrificed to the lawless passion of one unscrupulous master. These are mainly contributions from Turkish provinces and the Greek islands, while a large proportion of them are said to be the daughters of Christian parents.* We have no means of knowing how many such veiled beauties now occupy the summer seraglio on the Bosphorus.

Dr. Talmage has a convenient faculty of seeing only what suits him, while to everything else he is happily blind. He hustles the records of history, the facts of science and every day's experience out of his way, as readily as a bustling housewife sweeps down cobwebs. Regardless of premises and all rules of ratiocination, he vaults with a reckless daring to such surprising results that one almost fancies the shepherd's crook has become a magician's wand. It is not strange that such a man should announce the astounding discovery that Modern Spiritualism originated the "free-love" doctrine, and

* The reader is referred to the Encyclopedia of "Useful Knowledge and General Literature," by Rev. J. L. Blake, A. M., page 831.

that those who practice it "are almost all Spiritualists." It would, however, surprise us to know that any sensible man is disposed to credit this assumption. That no one may either misapprehend the Oracle of the Tabernacle, or suspect the present writer of misrepresenting his views, I here reproduce what he says on this particular topic :

"Another mighty foe of the family relation is the prevalent doctrine of free love. Newspapers in advocacy of these doctrines fill the land. The greatest argument against it is that the advocates of it, without any exception, turn out libertines. Having broken up their own homes, they go about to destroy the homes of others. This obscene flock of carrion crows caw, caw, caw on their way to and from the moral carcasses. They are almost all Spiritualists, and they get the people of this world and the next so mixed up that they don't know who belong to them and who belong to the others. Free love and Spiritualism are twin sisters, and their morals are so bankrupt that they cannot pay one per cent. of righteousness. I can tell the spirits of the next world that if they cannot find any better company than they are said to pick out on earth, they had better stay where they are if they have any regard for their reputation. When those who are united in holy marriage have a special affinity for some one outside that bond, they had better go to studying the ten Commandments. Such persons are on the edge of a fall about ten thousand feet down. But at that distance they only strike once on the rocks and then bound off into the unfathomable."

Spiritualists do not concern themselves about the manner in which this Shepherd of souls may choose to pursue the game of which he speaks, namely, "this obscene flock of carrion crows ;" and as little do they care to know whether the chase is for exercise, profit or amusement. Being a lively representative of the Brooklyn pulpit we can but realize that the Messenger of the Tabernacle knows—from observation of course—a thing or two about the average phases of free love, also of its accidental relations to the church and the ministe-

rial office ; likewise concerning its liability to produce great trials and social discords, in which the family relations may be ruptured for all time. Moreover, having in his ministerial capacity "for righteousness' sake"—to the end that he might see and comprehend the naked truth, however shocking to his moral sensibilities—made the circuit of the gin mills and gambling hells of New York ; and having, also, under the protection of Providence and the Metropolitan police—whose ways are mysterious and past finding out—repeatedly visited the haunted shades of the Cyprians, it is quite possible he may have found the roosting places of the "unclean birds" of our modern Babylon. If he did, he must know that when he made this discovery he was neither in the illuminated courts of the great Spiritual Temple nor yet in the dwelling places of its recognized worshipers. Let us respectfully admonish this clerical sportsman that in this field his instinct is more unerring than his reason. If he is careful to keep the trail and not allow himself to double in the dark, and so return to the starting-point, he will find the game at last. Nor is this all ; he will not incur the least danger of poaching on any consecrated ground, or of being held for trespass on the complaint of any Spiritualist.

When a public religious teacher, whose office is supposed to insure something like the practice of righteousness in his treatment of others, using both pulpit and press in the dissemination of his views, boldly charges that Spiritualism is responsible for the free love doctrine, for the breaking up of so many homes and the utter desecration of the most important of all human relations, the Spiritualists claim the right to

meet the man on his own chosen ground who thus defames their character and dishonors their most hallowed convictions. That Modern Spiritualism can sustain any natural relation whatever to illicit love and licentiousness is an assumption which cannot be supported by a single substantial reason. These things never had any such relation ; indeed, they never can have, since, in their very nature, they are essentially and forever incompatible. The principles of Spiritualism and the unrestrained indulgence of the animal passions are so irreconcilable as to be incapable of permanent coëxistence.

But I shall be told that a number of professed Spiritualists have actually broken up their homes, established other relations, or allowed themselves to drift at random, following one attraction or another, as determined by temporary convenience or the passion of the hour. This is, unhappily, too true ; but it is no less susceptible of the clearest demonstration that, outside of the ranks of Spiritualists, there are numberless examples, including many church members and several clergymen, who, through the triple power of "the world, the flesh, and the devil," have "fallen from grace"—from places as high and to depths as low as any Spiritualist is likely to find. Every one knows that there were many cases of alienation, desertion, and divorce before the advent of Modern Spiritualism. Men and women have often been unequally yoked together in all ages, *principally by the clergy*, and domestic unhappiness is no new thing under the sun. We have never yet met with a single spirit, in all our intercourse with the invisible intelligences, who either recommended or sanctioned the

looseness of life which is charged to the account of the great body of Spiritualists. It finds no countenance in the principles of the Spiritual Philosophy. On the contrary, if I have any knowledge of this subject, this pure and sublime philosophy demands of every man that he shall subordinate the appetites, impulses, and passions of his lower nature to reason and to the laws of the higher or spiritual life. It is in this respect, especially, that Spiritualism, in its most comprehensive sense, rises heavenward above all other systems in its supreme demands for the purification of human nature, the consecration of all our powers to beneficent uses, and the highest moral elevation of our ideal of the divine life on earth.

Now, what would become of the existing religious institutions if they were judged by the character of such of their supporters as fall below the standard of morals they set up? It is a notorious fact that most of the criminals who fill the State prisons all over this country are firm believers in the cardinal doctrines of the evangelical churches. In some of the prisons investigations have been made into the religious faith of the convicts without discovering a single Quaker, Swedenborgian, Unitarian, or Spiritualist. Scarcely a capital offender against the laws swings out of time into eternity at the end of a halter who does not express his belief in the doctrines of original sin, total depravity, vicarious atonement, a personal devil, and a merciless retribution for all the impenitent. Multitudes of these people live and die in the Calvinistic faith. Now is Mr. Talmage willing to have the ministers of his faith, the people of his charge, and his system

of religion, all judged by the State prison standard of character? If he is not, it may be well for him to take warning from the Scripture which reads: "*For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*" (Luke vi. 38.)

Not only is it represented that the free lovers "are almost all Spiritualists," but it is affirmed that "newspapers in advocacy of these doctrines fill the land." One would be authorized to infer from this that such papers are more numerous about here than were the frogs which came out of the waters in the days of the Egyptian plagues. Also that, with few exceptions—not worth mentioning—they are all supported by Spiritualists. But what are the facts? Why, that there is not a single spiritual paper, either in this country or Europe, that has any recognition as an exponent of the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism, which advocates free love on the plane of our animal life.

Two conspicuous attempts have been made, from first to last, to establish such papers on the patronage of Spiritualists; but they received so little encouragement that they very soon died, not alone from the sad infirmities of their projectors, but of a moral and material marasmus and their own pestilential atmosphere. The first and most notable attempt of this kind occurred a quarter of a century ago, and was the enterprise of a certain well-known doctor and his wife, aided by a conspicuous author of books on sociology, and one Lazarus, an unclean writer on love and the marriage relation. In this particular instance the disappointed editors and publishers so utterly failed in their illegitimate enterprise that, in the excite-

ment of penitence or desperation, they were suddenly converted to Roman Catholicism! It was a pleasant relief to be assured that religion, or something else, had cooled the hot blood, and that the feverish souls of those free lovers had at last found rest in the bosom of the mother Church.

The next most demonstrative attempt of the free lovers to affiliate with Spiritualism was scarcely more successful, and it finally resulted in a similar failure. When the free dispensation of love, *that was not altogether Platonic*, ceased to bring the visible means of support, the paper was suspended. Then the fair proprietors—leaving the disconsolate brokers who depended on them for occult information in their stock-gambling operations—went abroad to manipulate the verdant scions of the English aristocracy for their personal delectation and in the interest of their cause. The two or three small sheets—unwashed rags of papers—printed monthly or semi-occasionally, in little country towns, have no more influence on the great body and mind of Spiritualists than so many outside cabbage leaves.

The Spiritualists have no virtue and religion *to boast of*, nor are they accustomed to advertise their piety from the pulpit and in the papers. Indeed, the Divine Messenger at the Tabernacle boldly affirms that we “cannot pay one per cent. of righteousness.” If this is so, the failure is complete; and it is all the more to be lamented for the reason that we may not hope to borrow any small surplus of righteousness from those who accuse us falsely. Such people are sure to have enough to do to attend to their own obligations. And here we are reminded that they have another advantage over Spiritualists

which is a great thing for those who most need it—they have a moral and theological bankrupt law by which any rascal—even the vilest sinner—may have the righteousness of a just man imputed to him. Under this peculiar arrangement those who wickedly revile their neighbors may continue to do so—may grossly misrepresent their characters, views and conduct as long as they are so disposed, and at last escape by taking the benefit of that law.

The man whose business it is to dispense Calvinism and his own crude ideas at the Tabernacle is ignorant of one subject on which he presumes to speak with oracular authority. Spiritualism is not the insignificant and slipshod creature of his imagination. No! it is a mighty Angel, descended from Heaven and radiant with the morning light of a New Dispensation. It comes to roll the stone away from the sepulchre of universal humanity, and to demonstrate our immortality. In the presence of men and angels it breaks the seals of the invisible *arcana*, and reveals the sources of the world's inspiration. It is the living interpreter of the sacred books of all ages and nations. Spiritualism has no flesh and blood relations. It never had a "twin sister," and hence can not have had one of easy virtue. The man who thus boldly defames many noble men, not excepting their mothers, wives, and daughters—women of pure minds and blameless lives—does not appear to be familiar with biblical history. He evidently does not know how many orthodox clergymen are in the State Prisons of the country; and he quite overlooks the fact that one of his brethren—a Presbyterian divinity student—founded the Oneida Community, so long an offense in the

nostrils of Christians and Infidels. On the contrary, Spiritualism sustains about the same relation to passional "free love" that the uncorrupted Gospel of Jesus did to the scarlet woman of the Apocalypse.

The charge that Spiritualists, as a people, have less respect for the relations of home than others has no better foundation than ignorance of the real facts and the heedlessness which is governed by the most superficial appearances. In referring to this subject we are reminded of a man who, many years ago, was a frequent and most welcome visitor at the residence of the writer. He was a gentleman of rare intelligence and unusual refinement, with the feeling and taste of a true poet and the delicate sensibilities of a pure woman. Though a wanderer for long years, in many countries and among rude peoples, yet the domestic circle—the sanctuary where faith is mutual and all the chaste affections bud and blossom in the unclouded sunshine of love—was the ideal of his life. No saint ever sought a holy shrine with a more sincere devotion; yet the heaven of his imagination eluded his grasp. He was a wanderer to the end. While engaged in the service of his country he died far away in a foreign land. His ashes mingle with the sterile sands of Algiers, but his spirit has gone home to rest in heaven. This modest layman did more to consecrate the domestic relations and affections in the universal mind and heart than all the dogmatic theologians and homilists of the present century. Our gentle friend was the author of "Home, Sweet Home." His name is yet green in the world's memory, and his song will continue to be sung in every land and in all living tongues. JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

gave us that deathless song, and he was a Spiritualist ! Rest, spirit of blessed memory ! *

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY,
WARREN Co., N. J., *October, 1880.* }

HOME, SWEET HOME.—At the close of the letter from the Brooklyn *Eagle* the reader will have noticed the writer's incidental allusion to his friend, JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, and the song which, more than any other in the world's minstrelsy, has consecrated the sacred relations of domestic life. It may not be out of place here to offer a suggestion for the consideration of Spiritualists. I have felt it to be my duty to repel the vile charge brought against this people by a professed minister of Jesus, whose extreme poverty—in respect to the amenities of polite discussion and the charity which “thinketh no evil” of the neighbor—is painfully conspicuous. But I am forcibly reminded, that the people whom he has so coarsely abused have it in their power to furnish a refutation—more emphatic than any language I can command—of this wholesale calumny. Let them erect, in Central Park, a monument to the memory of the distinguished disciple of their faith, who, though his gentle voice is audible no more, still speaks in his undying song to millions in all the tongues of the civilized world.

S. B. B.

* Mr. Wilson, a most enterprising citizen of Brooklyn, incurred the expense of ten thousand copies of the foregoing Letter, which were printed under his direction in pamphlet form, for gratuitous circulation.

PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION.

HARMONY OF FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

THE ACTIVE FORCE IN THE MORAL WORLD.

FROM THE (NEWBURYPORT) MERRIMAC VALLEY VISITOR.

The Andover Professor on Spiritualism—The Spirits at Stratford—Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D.—Irreverent Handling of the Sacred Canon—*Fantoccini* by the Invisibles in the Wardrobe—Demons Suspected of Arson—Waiting for the *Savants*—Falling back on Demonology—Science in Despair and Theology Desperate—Where are the Angels of Mercy?—Tartarean Jail Delivery—Power of Spirits over the Elements—Views of the Ancient Greeks—Testimony of Philosophers, Apostles, Pagan Historians and Christian Fathers—Truth about Demons—Visions of a Theological Professor—How he Views Modern Spiritualism—Disorderly Manifestations Among the Ancients—Significant Examples from the Scriptures—Lying under a Divine Commission—Unclean and Dumb Spirits—Swinish Affinities—Paul's Indictment of the Early Christians—Infidels at the Baptism and the Communion—Low Mediums of Sacred History—Contest between Science and Theology—Enlarging the Domain of Science—The Great Reformation.

WHEN the general at the head of an army finds himself in an exposed position, and harassed by constant assaults from without—with a prospect of soon being obliged to surrender to the wily and powerful enemy that is thundering along his lines—he may not stop to discuss the morality of the measures to be adopted in this emergency. Under such circumstances saints and sinners look and behave so much alike that one may not recognize a difference so marked as to admit of a logical distinction. Each holds his ground as long as possible, repelling the assailants with such weapons as he may be able to find, only capitulating when further resistance is in vain. The individual in the battle of life acts from similar

motives ; and even the religious teacher, instead of bearing about him the shield of righteousness and the sword of the spirit, may perhaps be tempted to depend on some infernal magazine for his armor. Even doctors of divinity do not wait for the gods to place consecrated weapons in their hands. On the contrary, they strike back with a will, often in a spirit of unholy hostility, and with such implements as may enable them to serve the purpose of the hour by the circumvention of the enemy. The peculiar strategy exhibited of late in the war against Spiritualism, is a suggestive text which, in the mind of the reader, may justify some special application of the foregoing observations ; at the same time the subject requires further elucidation.

We cannot pause in the midst of more important labors to notice the many frivolous objections to Spiritualism that daily fall from the lips of the unthinking multitude. But we are reminded that there are men of experience who long since had opportunities for personal observation, and are admitted to possess a certain reputation for scholastic acquirements and intellectual ability. When, for example, such a man as Prof. Austin Phelps, of Andover, expresses his views on a subject which carries along with it the strongest evidences of our immortality, and is so closely allied to the fundamental principles and essential interests of all revealed religion, we can only treat him with proper respect by weighing his words, which I propose to do in this communication.

As early as 1850, remarkable spiritual phenomena occurred in the family mansion of Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., of Stratford, Conn., father of the Andover professor, who was then

about commencing his theological studies. At first he was supposed to entertain the suspicion that the manifestations were the mischievous tricks of the children of Mrs. Phelps by her former husband. At the solicitation of the venerable doctor, Mr. Austin Phelps went home on a visit, expecting to speedily explain the mystery and put an end to the disorderly proceedings at the old homestead. He soon satisfied himself, however, that the children had no voluntary or conscious agency in the matter. He pursued his investigation with a pious determination to stop the noisy demonstrations of the Spirits; but they never recognized his authority. They did not even respect the wishes of the venerable master of the house. While he was engaged in prayer for deliverance from his infernal visitors the Spirits would hurl the Bible at him. Sometimes the sacred canon would pass close enough to his head to brush his whiskers, but never doing him the slightest personal injury. We have no conclusive evidence that the invisible powers undervalued the truths contained in the book. One of the spirits declared "There was a good deal of truth in the Bible, but a good deal of nonsense, too." While they did not regard it as a fetich to be worshiped, they took occasion to show that they had no special reverence for the chemical elements of paper, printer's ink, and the sheep, goat, or calf-skin with which it was bound. Neither prayers, entreaties, nor denunciations imposed the slightest check upon the daily and nightly serio-comic performances, all of which the good doctor regarded as nothing less than the most diabolical infestation.

The assumption that the spirits at Stratford were all of an

infernal type or degenerate character—diabolical in disposition and malicious in deed—is not supported by a rational analysis of the facts. The present writer lived at Bridgeport—within the distance of four miles—during the exciting period, and repeatedly visited the residence of Dr. Phelps. The facts plainly indicated that *the Spirits were determined to command attention*. They had something which they deemed it important to communicate, and evidently resolved to be heard for the sake of their cause. Courtly people are accustomed to gracefully bow their intrusive visitors out of their presence; but when the Doctor attempted to exorcise his unwelcome guests by prayer and speeches referring to their characters in terms more orthodox than complimentary, they only manifested a still stronger determination to remain until the object of their mission should be fairly accomplished. When at length candid inquiry succeeded dogmatism and denunciation, the apparent violence ceased, and the manifestations assumed a more quiet and orderly character.

The phenomena at the Phelps mansion continued during a period of some seven months, and it is believed that a candid review of the facts would fail to discover any positive evidence that the Spirits had the least disposition to inflict personal injury on any member of the family. They only emphasized the demonstrations of their presence in the degree necessary to secure respectful attention. If the silver spoons were “bent double by no visible agency,” they were all made “straight as before, with no dent or crease, or sign of having been bent” at all. When the family wardrobe was mysteriously entered and emptied of its contents, and the garments so dis-

posed as to represent the effigies of a number of human beings, the clothes were neither destroyed nor damaged. The doors were not materially injured by the "tremendous hammering," which always appeared to be on the opposite side from the observer. On one occasion, when the whole family went to church, leaving the house locked up, they returned finding the front door wide open, which suggested the idea that a robbery had been committed; but not an article of personal property was missing. It is true that the doctor's barn was one day destroyed by fire, and that the invisible powers fell under suspicion of being the authors of the mischief. I was never able to discover any reliable evidence that the Spirits were guilty of arson; but as they were presumed to have come in hot haste from that realm of intense incandescence so glowingly described in the Calvinistic theology, it was but natural that those who were sound in the faith should look to hell for the incendiaries.*

For a solution of the problem involved in the modern spiritual mysteries, Prof. Phelps, having waited long and in vain for science to explain the facts, reluctantly rests for the present on the demonology of the Bible, as will be perceived on perusal of his recent letter to the *Congregationalist*. The Professor occupies his present position from necessity rather than choice. He does not seriously object to the historical evil demons of the Jews and Greeks, but timidly shrinks from those whose incursions cross the orbit of his life. He still

* For Professor Phelps' own narrative of his observations at his father's residence, the reader is referred to "Spiritual Manifestations," by the Rev. Charles Beecher.

indulges a lingering hope that the *savants* may yet “give us something better”—vain hope, since the scientists who honestly investigate are converted. In the mean time the “despair of science” is the desperation of theology. I extract the following paragraph from the Professor’s letter :

“I do not hold to the hypothesis that Spiritualism is of Satanic origin, without qualification. I hold it as a hypothesis, the probability of which must depend on the degree of mastery which science obtains over the whole subject. It is only under the conditions that, before some of the phenomena in question, science is dumb, that I resort to the supernatural theory at all. In common with the rest of the world, I am waiting for science to recover from its ‘despair,’ and to give us some explanation of the facts which shall deserve respect. It is not wise to find more of the demoniacal in the universe than we are compelled to find. But so long as science gives us nothing better, my mind falls back upon the Biblical demonology, as being the most probable thing we have, within the range of human knowledge, in explanation of the mystery.”

It may seem a little singular that a man who sincerely accepts a religious system for which he claims a supernatural origin, should question physical science for over thirty years for an explanation of similar mysteries, and that we should still find him patiently “waiting for science to recover from its despair !” Is there not something anomalous in the Professor’s attitude ? Why should a man who really believes in the power and disposition of God and his invisible ministers, and of the devil and his angels, to work in opposition to natural laws and all ordinary methods, manifest such extreme reluctance in accepting the present application of his theory ?

It will be observed that Prof. Phelps, Rev. Charles Beecher, Rev. Joseph Cook and others, in accepting the demonological theory, admit the spiritual origin of the modern phenomena.

This is a most important concession to Spiritualism, and these men are on record as leading the way for its final acceptance by the Church. They seem to have discovered that this is the only way in which they may hope to successfully defend the claims of revealed religion against the scientific materialism of the age. Forced to retreat from a field that is lost, and to reluctantly fall back on the demonology of the Bible, as the fortress from which alone they may hope to vindicate its own claims, these gentlemen appear to derive a melancholy satisfaction from the reflection that the Spirits in these days are all evil, and therefore proper subjects of our pious displeasure and of the Divine reprobation.

But how is it possible for the rational mind to have a preference for this view of the subject? Can it afford any sane man or woman—any creature in human shape—pleasure to believe that while there has been a general jail delivery in the infernal regions, to the imminent peril of this world, still the celestial angels are all either cooped up in some orthodox heaven, or off on an everlasting pleasure excursion to other worlds? Are there indeed no angels of mercy who enjoy their freedom, and will come at our call to shield the helpless, and lead earth's poor wanderers home?

Perhaps the ostensible motive of some of our modern divines is not the one that really determines their action. I certainly have no disposition to judge them uncharitably. It would seem, however, to an unregenerate observer, that the chief purpose in accepting the phenomena of modern Spiritualism as illustrations of ancient demonology, is to turn the essential facts to practical account in the clerical war against

the materialism of science. That these facts furnish the clergy with powerful weapons which may be used with great force in that particular direction, there can be no doubt. And as nothing can have been made or permitted to exist in vain, our religious people may finally be able to utilize hell and modern Spiritualism by converting the whole into an armory, from which the soldiers of the cross may be able to draw their implements and means of defense in their war against the most formidable enemy of the Church.

I trust I shall not make the mistake of treating the superficial views of even the enemies of Spiritualism with either undue levity or severity. The truth I am called to defend is one of grave importance and far-reaching in its relations to the highest human interests. A subject of such solemn moment ; so profound in its principles ; so subtle, irresistible and universal in its influence, should inspire a just sense of personal responsibility in the public teacher, and it should be treated in a manner becoming its high quality. I do not propose to temporize, nor to diminish the force of a great truth by unnecessary qualifications. If this truth is the sword of the Spirit, who shall venture to blunt its edge, or permit it to be tarnished by unworthy hands ?

In the history of the early nations, especially in their sacred literature and monumental remains, we discover many evidences of the occult mysteries which appear to have been everywhere indentified with the origin of religious ideas. Indeed, it may be safely affirmed that every religious system which has exerted any strong and lasting influence on the human mind and character, has been founded on certain

spiritual facts, or phenomena illustrating the intimate relations of the physical world and the realms of incorporeal life and intelligence. The ancient nations not only believed in the existence and presence of invisible intelligent beings, but they recognized their power over the elements and forms of the physical world, their capacity to influence human feeling, thought and action, and to direct the current of public affairs. The religious ceremonies of ancient Greece ; her æsthetic revelations, dramatic creations, and every form of commemorative art, history and poetry—all abound with evidences of the recognition of Spirits from another world. Hesiod, one of the earliest Greek writers believed that Spirits presided over the destinies of men. His views concerning their existence, presence and influence within the sphere of human life on earth are expressed in the following lines :

Aërial Spirits by great Jove designed
To be on earth the guardians of mankind ;
Invisible to mortal eyes they go,
And mark our actions, good or bad, below ;
The immortal spies with watchful care preside,
And thrice ten thousand round their charges glide ;
They can reward with glory or with gold,
Such power divine permission bids them hold."

The most gifted minds, in all countries and in every period of the world's history, have entertained the spiritual idea, and given it various forms of expression. The Hebrews, Greeks and Romans ascribed important facts in their experience, and many events of national importance, to the interposition of invisible intelligences. The sacred books of the Hindoos and other Pagan nations recognize the powers of the unseen

world in the management of human affairs. The Jewish, Christian and Moslem Scriptures are filled with allusions to Spirits, their positive existence, the revelation of their presence among men, and all the diversified exhibitions of their power. St. Paul speaks of "the prince of the power of the air," and St. Jerome assures us that in his time the doctors of the Church entertained the opinion that the air was peopled by Spirits. Such references are often met with in the writings of the apostolic fathers and early historians of the Church, who believed that the more impure spirits did not occupy the higher or more ethereal regions of the atmosphere, but were disposed to dwell below in intimate relations with the earth. The fundamental fact of the constant interpenetration of the mundane realm of existence by the inspiring influences and moral forces of the Spiritual Spheres, was so generally accredited among the ancients that their eminent authors do not appear to have thought it necessary to marshal proofs in support of a proposition which no competent authority was likely to dispute.

And here I must mention the fact that one very common theological assumption has been the means at once of leading multitudes of sincere believers into a mischievous error, and of libeling millions of saints in heaven. It is boldly assumed that all demons must necessarily be evil spirits. Prof. Phelps, being a Greek scholar, is of course better informed, and might readily correct this error if so disposed. And yet he falls back on the demonology of the Bible, without so much as a single intimation that a demon may be a pure and good spirit in spite of the bad name given him by the translators. The

truth is, the Greek word is altogether neutral as to any moral suggestions respecting the character of the intelligences to which it was applied. The Platonists recognized the presence of invisible genii, and believed that men were incited to both good and evil deeds by their influence. Socrates was visited by spirits of opposite characters, and a good demon was his counsellor. Lactantius accepted the idea that there are two general classes of demons, celestial and terrestrial, and he regarded the latter as primarily the authors of all the wrongs perpetrated on earth. The original word is very improperly rendered devil in the English version of the New Testament. The demons of the Greeks were evidently spirits of men who had previously existed on earth. To say the least, they were individualized intelligences of the human stamp. The word signified nothing more. It certainly did not determine the moral character of these intelligences, since there were both celestial and terrestrial demons, or good and evil Spirits.

The false idea I have attempted to expose has no better foundation than a dogmatic assumption without proof and against reason. It has been long and tenderly cultivated by those who know how sadly this thorn in the world's path has scratched and lacerated our poor humanity. Let it now be plucked up by the roots and destroyed by the consuming fire which is the most expressive symbol of the Truth. We cannot exhaust the evidence in support of our position. According to Hesiod, when men of the Golden Age died and became demons, the change was viewed as an "honorable promotion." Rev. Charles Beecher, in his "Review of the Spiritual Manifestations," published in 1853, quotes the words of Plato to

show that, in the opinion of that illustrious philosopher, "when good men die they attain honor and become demons;" also the testimony of Philo to prove that "soul and demon are different names for the same thing." In this sense the word was used in the Greek Scriptures. Hence when we read that certain persons were "possessed of devils," we are not necessarily to infer that they were under the dominion of evil spirits, since the shades of noble men, celestial demons, or (if we must follow the translators) very good devils, might exercise a controlling influence over mortals.

It was the privilege of the clergy to "fall back upon the Biblical demonology" for a probable solution of the modern mysteries. The time had come when they felt obliged to do something; and, because science could suggest nothing better, they have, alas, fallen back to perdition! In the words of the eloquent Roman—*spoken at a funeral*—"What a fall was there, my countrymen!"

But will they be able to rest any more comfortably in the present fallen state by longer cherishing the falsehood that the Spirits are all unclean? Have they such an unreasoning preference for foul demons that they must have such to the utter exclusion of all others? And must they continue to defame the characters of all the inhabitants of the Spirit-World of whose existence they have any positive knowledge? If they are going to depend on demons to arm them against the subtle materialism which, in the name of science and positive philosophy, now threatens the interests of the Church, they ought at least to have the grace and magnanimity to refrain from bearing false witness against their spiritual neighbors.

Let them tell the whole truth about the demons, that their misguided followers may know there are some pure and wise Spirits still sent to this world on errands of angelic protection, of sweet fellowship and heavenly mercy,

“ When the dark Ethiop learns to change his skin ;
 When the fierce leopard takes away his spots ;
 When wolves turn shepherds, and protect the sheep ;
 When frosts grow kind, and kiss to life the flowers ;
 When tyrants fall in love with Liberty,
 Sectarian creeds will cease to stab the soul.” *

It is with profound regret that I am obliged, under this indictment, to convict Prof. Phelps of a want of fidelity to the facts, and to impartial testimony. If this is important in secular affairs, it can not be less so in the treatment of those grave questions which relate to religion and the immortal realities of the life hereafter. And here I must cite the following passage from his letter in the *Congregationalist* :

“ That instructive faith in the supernatural, which the Bible feeds with dignity and purity, if denied such food, we might naturally expect to find rotting in some such putrescent heap as modern Spiritualism.”

I accept the issue made by this learned theologian who brings his little taper to warm the sunshine, and to light the summer day. To determine with what degree of “dignity and purity” our “instinctive faith in the supernatural” is fed by the Bible, it will be necessary to look at that particular side of the subject which the Professor just now keeps in

* These lines are from the spirit of the author of the “ Course of Time,” whose theology, the reader will observe, has been radically reformed by his residence in the spiritual heavens.

shadow. To this end I will refer to several significant passages in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. I will not, however, offend the refined moral sense of your readers by reciting the vile proposition of Lot in respect to his virgin daughters—made to the populace of Sodom while he yet entertained “two angels” at a feast. Though a believer in angelic visitors he was a very weak man, as appears from the further history of his life; and the religious world should make haste to forget a bad example, which does not “feed the instinctive faith in the supernatural—with dignity and purity.” *

Among the ancient prophets—true and false—was Balaam, who, according to the account given in the twenty-second chapter of the book of Numbers, was instructed on a certain occasion to accompany the princes of Moab. The prophet may have had some private aim or object in view in obeying the Divine command, since the record represents that, notwithstanding he had been divinely directed to go, yet “God’s anger was kindled because he went.” This led to one of the most remarkable illustrations of Spirit Mediumship on record. Balaam, as it appears, rode on a beast, the common English name of which has become a synonym for obstinacy and stupidity. The prophet was brutal in his treatment of the beast; and the angel of the Lord, using the dumb animal as both a seeing and speaking medium, sharply rebuked Balaam, and then reasoned the case with him in mild and persuasive He-

* See the Biblical account in Genesis, chapter xix., from which it would appear that the antiseptic properties in Lot’s constitution were not sufficiently pronounced to enable him to share the fate of his wife.

brew. We may naturally presume that there was at least an appearance of awful gravity in the demeanor of the animal—this is characteristic of the class—and, as we cannot impeach the morals of the species, we may as well frankly admit that, in this case, the “instinctive faith in the supernatural” was fed “with dignity and purity.”

But there were cases in which the “dignity and purity” were not so clearly illustrated. Isaiah (chapter xix. 14), in referring to the calamities which were to come upon Egypt, says, “The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof; and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.” The same prophet (Isa. viii. 19-20) reproved the people of his day for running after certain “familiar spirits,” who had nothing of consequence to communicate, and the class of “wizards that peep and that mutter.” To “peep” may mean to cry like a chicken, while to “mutter” is to utter with inaudible or otherwise imperfect articulations. Such stupid pretenders to mystical lore and spiritual insight were of no possible service to the people, and hence it was unwise to seek after them. Every rational Spiritualist is somewhat disposed to believe in Isaiah, and we often have occasion to advise novices not to waste much time with spirits and mediums who at their best can only “peep” like chickens and mutter some unintelligible jargon to no profit.

As a further illustration of the alleged superior “dignity and purity” of the manner in which some of the Scripture writers minister to our “instinctive faith in the supernatural,” I respectfully submit the following :

“And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth and do so. Now, therefore, behold the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets.” (I. Kings, xxii. 20-23).

Let the reader observe that it is not the spirit of some wanderer from this dim orb, deceived, benighted and lost; nor a poor demon whose rudimental life was blackened and blasted by fatal hereditary predispositions and the world's scorn, who is made to sanction this iniquity; but it is the Hebrew Jehovah, whom Christians worship as the Creator of the universe and the loving Father of the spirits of all flesh! Had the commission to engage in this foul business of systematic lying for the questionable purpose of leading even a bad man to ruin, emanated from Spirits who use our modern mediums, the fact would have been cited by every evangelical minister in the country as evidence of the fathomless depravity of the whole system and the diabolical character of all its invisible agents. And does it follow of necessity that our “instinctive faith in the supernatural” must be fed in this way alone? No! There is no divine afflatus here, teaching celestial truths with “dignity and purity.” It is no breath of God coming down out of heaven; but rather a foul Euroclydon, sweeping up from the nether depths of fathomless perdition, filling our sphere with a moral miasm and blighting the morning-glories of this world.

The phenomena illustrating the presence and the power of

Spirits were of frequent occurrence in the first century, and the constant references to the same in the New Testament clearly show that a large proportion of them were of a disorderly character. One of the biographers of Jesus states that the Master was "led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." (Matt. iv. 1.) Another says, "the spirit driveth him into the Wilderness." (Mark i. 12.) When he was in the region of Tyre and Sidon a Syrophenician Greek woman came to him in behalf of her daughter who "had an unclean spirit," and she "besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter." Jesus complied with her request. (Mark vii. 25, 26.) After his transfiguration he was one day surrounded by a great crowd, when one of the multitude said: "Master, I have brought my son which hath a dumb spirit, and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him, and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away." This dumb spirit was cast out, the medium being thrown so violently to the ground that he appeared to be dead. (Mark ix. 17-26.) In the Synagogue at Capernaum "there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil," and he was very noisy. In the exorcism of this spirit the medium was prostrated but not injured. (Luke iv. 33-35.) Among the "women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities" was one "Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils." (Luke viii. 2.) It is recorded that while Philip was preaching in Samaria, "unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many." (Acts viii. 7.) When Paul and Silas were at Philippi, in Macedonia, they were met by "a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, which brought her masters much

gain by soothsaying"—fortune-telling under spirit influence. (Acts xvi. 16-18.)

In closing this summary of the New Testament illustrations, a more complete description of a single example, as presented in Mark's record of the Gospel, will afford a clearer conception of the more desperate phases of the spiritual phenomena of those times. Jesus had just crossed the sea of Galilee with his disciples and was in "the country of the Gadarenes."

"And when he was come out of the ship immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains; because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him. . . . But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, 'What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.' For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him, 'What is thy name?' And he answered, saying, 'My name is Legion, for we are many.' And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

Now there was nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, 'Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.' And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand), and were choked in the sea." (Mark v. 2-13.)

The critical reader will not omit to observe that these disorderly spirits, endowed with such preternatural powers for mischief, were most orthodox in faith according to the approved standard of the modern Church. The spirit who spoke for the Legion declared with singular emphasis their faith in the divinity of Jesus; at the same time among them

all there does not appear to have been one benighted soul who cared to hide the dismal aspects of a perverted nature and a wasted life. In view of all this, and much more of a similar character, it is still arrogantly assumed that our "instinctive faith in the supernatural" must derive all the means of its support from the Bible, to the exclusion of personal experience and a living inspiration. The Church may as well understand that if all modern mysteries are to be explained without reference to another world, and the agency of spiritual beings in their production, then the Bible and the sacred books of all heathen nations must share the same fate.*

I am pleased to know that ordinary infidels are not so illogical as to reject what is really good and true for the reason that the treasure may be surrounded by grosser elements in which no one may discover intrinsic value. We accept the exquisite poetry of the Psalmist as cordially as we condemn the gross sensuality and villainy that blackened the character of the inspired author. We never quarrel with the poet's lyre, even when it is tuned to the unhappy strains of a penitent adulterer. The epistles of Paul are none the less instructive and forcible because some of the best ones were written

* Rev. Charles Beecher saw this twenty-seven years ago (April, 1853), when he submitted his "Review of the Spiritual Manifestations" to the Congregational Association of New York and Brooklyn. The following brief extract will show how vividly the truth was impressed on his mind:

"If a theory be adopted everywhere else but in the Bible, excluding spiritual intervention, *in toto*, and accounting for everything physically, then will the covers of the Bible prove but pasteboard barriers. Such a theory will sweep its way through the Bible and its authority; its plenary inspiration will be annihilated."

to Christians who made a Bacchanalian entertainment of the Lord's supper, getting drunk, eating and drinking damnation to themselves; and—Paul being the witness—indulging in other crimes of so gross a nature that they “were not so much as named among the Gentiles.” The impassioned eloquence of Peter was not less inspired because there were “dumb spirits” in Judea. The conduct of the Good Samaritan was altogether Godlike, in spite of the heartlessness of the priest and the Levite, who in conjunction represented the interests of religion and ceremonies of the Temple-service. The life of Jesus of Nazareth was not less a transcendent revelation of moral excellence and spiritual beauty because one of his earliest disciples delivered him into the hands of the enemies who led him to crucifixion.

The time has come when the moral sense and intelligence of the age will hold its religious teachers to more rigid rules of consistency. We have reached the limit of the period when fooling with a serious subject is likely to be tolerated. If the Church is full of baptized infidels, who uphold the ancient historical supernaturalism(?) while they yet wait for science to explain all modern mysteries on the principles of physics, they may as well understand that we fully comprehend their equivocal position and their shallow policy of evasion. They must either discard their religion, because through all the early history of its development it was mixed up with disorderly manifestations from Spirits, or they must cease to make such disorderly phenomena a ground of objection to the just claims of Modern Spiritualism. This is the issue which must be met here and now. Our clerical opposers have grown old and gray

in superserviceable efforts to assist the Lord by annihilating Spiritualism. Thus far the result only shows that

“ Folly in fools bears not so strong a note
As folly in the wise when wit doth dote.”

If it were not a matter of daily observation, we should be amazed at the stupidity of the opposition. The stale objection that the communications from Spirits are either utterly worthless or manifestly unimportant, is constantly repeated by people who do not appear to have heard of the “dumb spirits” of the New Testament. While insisting that the Spirits should always be able to give learned tests to ambitious scholars, like “the gift of tongues,” and demanding withal more “dignity and purity” on the part of our mediums, they still neglect to tell the truth about them, while they pay their respects to Balaam’s ass. If there are undeveloped spirits and mediums now whose words are without wisdom—who give us nothing new—so there were peeping and muttering wizards in the days of the prophets. The masters and students of popular divinity talk about the superior truth and dignity of the Biblical methods of feeding the love of the supernatural, while they keep out of sight the amazing fact that a single spirit, under a contract sanctioned by the Lord—without even the poor motive of self-interest in justification—agreed to become a very common liar in the mouth of an indefinite number of Jewish prophets. It is said that our modern mediums are mostly ignorant and perverse, low in the scale of intellectual and moral development (this is not true); that they lack the fine quality of respectability, and the *eclat* of social recognition in the

gilded *salons* of our polite society. And yet the people who make these disparaging observations forget that the religion they have made fashionable had its ancient demoniacs from the catacombs of the Holy City ; its Christian Magdalenes who imbosomed a community of devils ; and the two thousand hogs, which—under the Christian dispensation—were developed as mediums for unclean spirits in a single day ! How long, oh Lord, will our pious censors continue to “strain at a gnat and swallow a camel ?”

Professor Phelps, with unequaled offensiveness of speech, characterizes Spiritualism as a “*putrescent heap*,” and he professes to find our “instinctive faith in the supernatural” buried and “rotting” in this huge pile of infernal compost. His poor conception of its character; and this attempt to excite a feeling of disgust and hostility in the public mind; are so far beneath the dignity of the subject and the proper office of the religious teacher, that his words will have little weight with those who reach their conclusions by honest inquiry and logical reasoning. Unfortunately there are many whose views are determined by their own ignorance and the force of popular prejudice ; but it is not a hopeful case which prompts a man of letters to make such an appeal in the name of Religion.

I am happy to know that the attitude of Professor Phelps will neither prevent nor postpone the inevitable result. Material science will soon drive theology to the wall unless the Church makes a virtue of necessity by accepting Spiritualism. The doctors may speculate as they will ; this is the only alternative. The essential facts and principles of Spiritualism are

not mere fancies ; they are not “ profane, and old wives’ fables ; ” they are not flimsy trappings and the cheap tinsel of theatrical exhibition. On the contrary, they are everywhere and irresistible—substantial as solid spheres, and will remain when the last mournful wreck of the old theologies goes to pieces and is swallowed up in the dead sea of the past.

The poor time-servers, who balance truth and popularity, have nearly had their day ; they will finish their little work and go away to be forgotten ; but the truth of a demonstrated immortality will endure forever to inspire the hopes of all the living by pouring the golden splendors of the immortal Morning over and through the portals of the grave ! In the coming century, Spiritualism will extend the boundaries of science into other worlds ; and the little child shall hold the unbroken chain of that sublime induction which, like the patriarch’s ladder, leads up from earth to heaven. Then will the truth appear in all the majesty of its power, and Modern Spiritualism be recognized as the great Reformation of all the ages.

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, 165 EAST 49TH ST. }
NEW YORK, *Jan.* 1881. }

ANOTHER WITNESS TO THE TRUTH.

DAYLIGHT APPARITION OF A DEPARTED SPIRIT.

FROM THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE OF FEBRUARY 6, 1881.

Vision of a Prominent Merchant—Sensation on Brooklyn Heights—An unexpected Visitor from the Spirit-World—A Son returns to his Father's House in Daylight—Acknowledged Integrity of the Witness—Value of his Testimony—Spiritual Facts and Sensorial Phantoms—Positive Recognition—Shall we See and not Believe?—Philosophy of Mental Phantasmagoria—Coming when not thought of by the Observer—The Apparition suddenly Vanishes—Not the result of Diseased Organic Action—Phenomenon irreconcilable with the Laws of Physics—The Fact due to Spiritual Presence and Agency—A Conviction that rests on Evidence of the Sense of Sight—A Christian Gentleman and shrewd Business Man—Truth regardless of Popularity.

To the Editor of the Tribune :

SIR—The account of the recent spiritual experiences of a prominent merchant, as given by a reporter in *The Tribune* of the 25th instant, adds the testimony of another honest witness to the demonstrative proofs, not only of the immortality of man, but also of the intimate relations of the visible and invisible spheres of human existence, and the present intercourse between the two states of being. It will gratify many readers of *The Tribune* to know that the integrity of the witness to this remarkable fact is beyond dispute. Scarcely less important is the evidence that the gentleman who saw his departed son "in broad daylight," one year after his funeral, is a competent observer, being "a shrewd, practical business man," not credulous, but naturally inclined to

skepticism. Thus admitted to possess all the requisite qualifications of a close observer and reliable witness, is there any probability that he was deceived?

But you are pleased to suggest that the strength of the evidence "will be impaired, in the minds of many, by the fact that the gentleman is an earnest Spiritualist." If this observation should be justified by the fact, the fault will not be in the witness, but "in the minds of many other men." I well remember the time when it was boldly maintained that an atheist could never be depended on to speak the truth; that while Christians might be allowed to swear whenever they pleased, infidels should not be permitted to take the judicial oath and give testimony in the courts. If those pious people are not all dead yet, they have been greatly liberalized by the freedom of the press, and the more tolerant and benign spirit of the present age. The fact that our latest witness can distinguish his own son from any and every other person in the world, and that he continues to accept the evidence of his senses, can by no means either invalidate his testimony or in any degree weaken the force of the evidence he has furnished. On the contrary, if it could be made to appear that, from any cause whatever, he either lacked the capacity to recognize his own child, or that he was so obstinate in his unbelief that he would not credit the evidence of his own senses, then, indeed, his testimony would be utterly worthless.

What evidence is there that the form recognized as the merchant's son was a mere phantom, born of a disordered brain? Accepting your reporter's account as the ground from which we reason, there is none whatever. All the forms

of the phantom creation spring from preëxisting derangements of the organs of sensation, or from the abnormally exercised faculties of the mind. Sensations and thoughts assume what appear to be outstanding forms. But in the case under discussion *it was not an antecedent thought that made way for and produced the visible image, for no thought of his son was cognizable by the father.* It will be observed that the image presented to the vision takes precedence in time and determines the fashion of the thought it inspires. Had the mind of the witness been preëccupied at the time by the memory of his son, there might have been some possible ground for the inference that the image was merely *subjective*; in other words, an ideal conception taking, apparently, objective form by the preternatural force of cerebral action. In delirium tremens, fevers and other forms of disease accompanied by intense cerebration, abnormal sensations and false conceptions of the mind assume the semblance of reality in many grotesque and hideous shapes, which, by a reflex action of the sensories, become psycho-physiological pictures, and are to all appearance objective as the images formed in the camera. In order to attribute the merchant's vision to anything peculiar in the momentary condition of his mind, with any show of reason, *it must be made to appear that the psychical fact was the visible transcript of an antecedent mental impression or conception.* On this point the gentleman himself is the only person competent to testify, and he had no thought or consciousness of any such preëccupation of his mind. Moreover, if some imaginary latent impression in the mind will enable us to account for the sensorial image, why was it—when the mind of the

observer had been still further preëccupied by what he was obliged to regard as the visible presence of his son—that the apparition mysteriously disappeared? *These facts show that when the father had no thought of his son, the latter suddenly appeared, and that when his thoughts were all centered on him, and the life-like image was before his vision, the apparition as suddenly vanished!*

An honorable merchant, distinguished for his intelligence, undoubted sincerity, a disposition to “try the spirits,” and “prove all things,” and for a level head in his business relations, becomes a Spiritualist from witnessing phenomena which, in his judgment, can not be accounted for by reference to the laws of physics, at the same time they admit of no explanation on any theory that rejects spiritual agency in their production. Evidently there is nothing in such a conviction—the natural result of such evidence on an honest mind—which can either blunt his powers of perception or weaken his judgment. Neither the capacity to see clearly, nor the ability to exercise a logical discrimination, can have been injured by the occurrence of a phenomenon which calls these faculties into normal activity. No one pretends to think that human testimony is impaired because the witness is either an earnest Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Catholic. Nor is such evidence of any greater value because of the religious professions and associations of the witnesses. As the world goes, there are many very pious people who are very poor witnesses. Would it not be a graceful thing on the part of the press to admit Spiritualists to an equality with other people? Now that so many of the

scientists, philosophers, artists and principal literati of Europe accept the facts of Spiritualism, it is a little too late in the nineteenth century to discount the testimony of an honest merchant, who is also a Christian gentleman and clear-headed witness to the truth of Spiritualism, because he will neither reject the evidence of his senses, nor balance his personal popularity against the truth.*

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, }
NEW YORK, *Jan.* 26, 1881. }

* The timely letter from the Editor-at-Large to the Editor of the *New York Tribune* appeared in the last Sunday edition of that paper—date of the 6th instant—and through that medium will probably reach not much less than a quarter of a million of readers in every part of the world. The gentleman referred to—whose son recently appeared to him in his own house, in Brooklyn—if rumor may be credited, is a pillar in Mr. Beecher's church and one of the chief merchant princes of New York.

ED. BANNER OF LIGHT.

THE WATCHMAN ON SPIRITUALISM.

FALLACY OF POPULAR OBJECTIONS EXPOSED.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, FEB. 12, 1881.

Theory of Jugglery Abandoned—New Testament Demonology—Conquest of the World by the Spirits—Looking at Truth Through a Cloud—Has God Resigned his Scepter?—False Views and Unreasonable Demands—Imperfection of all Human Instruments—A Stupid Devotion to what is Old—Blind Faith in Sacred Fictions—Closing the eyes to Present Facts—Reasoning with the Watchman—Will he Open his Shutters?

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I N *The Watchman* of Jan. 13th, I find an article which appears to carry with it the authority of the editorial sanction. The writer refers to some of the recently published books in illustration of the modern mysteries, especially to the "Scientific Basis of Spiritualism ;" Mr. Allen Putnam's spiritual exposition of the Salem Witchcraft ; Joseph Cook's lectures ; the papers from the Leipzig professors ; also to the new edition of Dr. Samson's treatise, and Dr. Lorimer on Isms, both of which are said to ascribe the facts of Spiritualism to inherent forces of human nature not yet comprehended. The writer seems to think that the hypothesis which refers all the facts to deception and jugglery is scarcely admissible, and for the reason that *we have "the testimony of professional conjurers of eminence that the effects produced lie entirely outside the domain of their art to explain or to imitate."*

It is evident that the writer in *The Watchman* gives some-

thing like a *quasi* indorsement of the spiritual origin of the facts. He does not know what else to do with them ; and so, like Prof. Austin Phelps, D.D., of Andover, he falls back to the perdition of ungodly men in the Spirit-world, and there finds the only adequate explanation. It is "in the demonology of the New Testament." The following extract clearly indicates the anxious and unsettled state of the writer's mind on the subject of his article :

"The greatest marvels of Spiritualism cannot be imitated on the stage by conjurers any longer. We are confronted with marvels which cannot be explained very well upon the hypothesis of sleight-of-hand. And we doubt very much that the explanation of Dr. Samson will be accepted as adequate. We find it hard to believe that we ourselves have power to produce such things as are reported by the German professors. At the same time the hypothesis of the Spiritualists is equally inadequate. The mental and moral imbecility of the messages is a fact which all admit, and which can hardly be reconciled with the supposition that these messages come from the dead whose names they bear. Almost always they are far beneath the intellectual and moral attainments of those who profess to sign them. The only adequate explanation that has been proposed, it seems to us, is to be found in the demonology of the New Testament. Grant that the so-called spirits of this day do not manifest all the marks of the demons with whom Christ and the Apostles were confronted, what difference does this make ? The policy of the kingdom of darkness may be expected to change in its details in eighteen centuries."

It is here frankly admitted that the more important facts of Spiritualism cannot be imitated by conjurers ; that the sleight-of-hand hypothesis will not cover them ; that the theory of some mysterious force in the human body is uncertain and inadequate ; that it is difficult to credit the assumption that men in the flesh "have power to produce such things as are reported by the German professors." All this is candid and commendable. It is gratifying to witness this improvement

on the old spirit of dogmatic denial and unmeasured denunciation, which, for many years, characterized the religious opposition to Spiritualism. It shows that the millions who

——— “Walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep,”

are fast gaining power, not only over the elements and forces of matter, but over the human mind and heart. The agents employed in the spiritual advancement of this world are far too numerous and powerful to be resisted. With them it is not a mere question of logic ; they have the power to *force conviction*, even when and where it is most unwelcome. That the Spirits will continue to exercise their power in all lands, modifying the religious systems and political institutions of the people, we have no doubt ; and this great peaceful revolution is destined to proceed without stop or pause until they shall have made the conquest of the world !

And here I am reminded that there are many pious people who would be sad indeed if they shared this conviction. All who conscientiously believe that the unseen agents *are all evil* can only contemplate the possibility of such a triumph with a feeling of dismay. That those who seriously entertain this unwelcome view of the subject should show an unwillingness to accept the spiritual theory of the phenomena, is natural, and need occasion no surprise. They are startled when confronted by the facts, because they utterly demolish all their preconceived opinions and the speculations of a materialistic philosophy. When for the first time they are made to realize the truth that

“ Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick, in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of——”

they naturally yield to a feeling of profound concern. The timid mind is agitated by the questions which relate to its own security. If these invisible agents possess supra-mortal powers and immeasurable resources for mischief, what may they not do to mislead us to our ruin? If bolts and bars are useless, and closed doors no protection; if they travel with the celerity of thought; if they can paralyze our bodies by a touch; and breathe into our very souls their infernal inspiration and the foul atmosphere of the pit; what shall we do to escape from their presence, and how shall we be saved? We are touched with a feeling of compassion for the people whose weak faith in God leads them to the terrible conclusion that he is turning over the affairs of the natural universe and of his moral government on earth into the hands of diabolical agents. We have no such painful apprehensions to disturb digestion and to give us the nightmare. Those poor souls whose fears are their counsellors will be relieved so soon as they shall have wiser grown by some spiritual experience of their own.

The great stumbling block in the way of the writer in *The Watchman* seems to be in the alleged fact that the communications are “almost always far beneath the intellectual and moral attainments” of the persons who are announced by name as the authors of the same. The writer appears to be lacking a proper comprehension of the subject, and precisely here is the foundation of his objection. Perhaps we may be

able to relieve his embarrassment. His first mistake consists in presuming that every spirit must be required to do his best as often as he presumes to break the silence. He must illustrate his highest thought ; his every effort must develop the most accomplished art ; and the greatest power of expression must be revealed every time he speaks. It does not require a philosopher to perceive that this demand is both unnatural and unreasonable. We do not require the mundane author, however distinguished for his dignity and ability, to distill the elements of his thought and speech when we meet him by the wayside and indulge in easy converse for five minutes. We never look to the caucus or a public reception for science and philosophy ; nor do we expect to extract the quintessence of all wisdom from one *tea party*. Some of the guests may have genius and learning ; but the poet does not generally talk in hexameters, and the scientist never carries his apparatus in his dress-coat pocket.

Now if the writer in *The Watchman* can rid himself of the false notion that a spirit is a creature essentially different from a man or woman ; if he can accept the fact that much the larger part of what is reported in the papers as coming from the invisible world consists of familiar conversations between personal friends—spirits in and spirits out of the body ; and, especially, if he will exercise his *reason* on the subject, he will be much less exacting in his demands. There are people so unreasonable as to expect every spirit to flatter their pride by acting on every capricious suggestion they may be pleased to offer. We do not expect the chemist to put his whole laboratory on a handcart and drive it round town to satisfy the

people who have no faith in the laws of molecular attraction and chemical affinity. The man who studies the stars must not be expected to build his observatory in every man's garret. The minister does not preach his best sermon in his neighbor's nursery ; and we may not require the scientist to demonstrate his last discovery at every railroad station. No more may we expect that every spirit will make a fool of himself by getting up on very high stilts to gratify the empty ambition of fools and pedants.

There is another difficulty in the way of a perfectly literal transmission of thought from the Spirit-world. This is found in the fact that the communicating intelligence must always depend on the use of some mortal instrument, which, it must be admitted, is seldom entirely suited to his purpose. The one used may be the best the Spirit can command, and yet quite imperfect. Then it is often the case that the Spirit himself, having had no preliminary discipline in this direction while on earth, finds it necessary to learn the elementary principles of psychological science before he can handle his mortal instruments with any great success. Indeed, we have no more right to presume that he will show himself an expert on the first trial than that the man who has never had his hand on a telegraphic instrument can, at once and without mistake, send a message over the wires. No matter how much general knowledge one may possess, he must have instruction and experience in this business before he can become an adept and take rank with the most rapid and skillful operator. So far from forming a proper estimate of the difficulties in the way of a perfect intercommunication between the two spheres of

being, the writer in *The Watchman* does not so much as recognize their possible existence. *He has no way of accounting for errors and imperfections but by referring all such messages to wicked demons or lying spirits.* True, he no doubt accepts, with unquestioning faith, the whole Bible, just as it is, not as a composite utterance of finite spirits of the other world, but as *the infallible word of God*, in spite of the many direct contradictions it contains ; its numerous errors of science, philosophy and morals, and its twenty-seven thousand, more or less, mistranslations of the original text.

So long as mankind, whether in this sphere or any other, are obliged to depend on human or other instruments, as mediums of intelligence or avenues of expression, so long will the results be measured by the capacity of the means and instruments so employed. This principle must command the instant recognition of every philosophical mind. If any man is disposed to question the truth of our proposition, let him attempt to do any one of the impossible things here specified. Let him try to weave a fine fabric out of coarse materials ; or —if I may use the old but expressive proverb—“make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear ;” produce perfect harmony on a musical instrument that is out of tune ; cut a marble statue, beautiful as Powers’ Greek Slave, with a coal-chisel ; or imitate the gold and crimson hues of morning in a charcoal drawing. If he fails in these attempts, he may possibly comprehend this absolute necessity for a complete adaptation of means and instruments to any important purpose which even the highest human intelligence may aim to accomplish. When the writer in *The Watchman* has fairly mastered this lesson in

spiritual science, the main ground of his principal objection to Spiritualism will have vanished forever.

The Watchman admits that conjurers can never solve the problems in the modern mysteries ; he has no idea " the explanation of Dr. Samson will be accepted ;" and he adds : " At the same time the hypothesis of the Spiritualists is equally inadequate." This is a grave mistake. *We only accept what the invisible powers say for themselves, and for the sufficient reason that they have demonstrated their own claims.* The hypothetical speculations are all the work of the opposition. They assume that the Spiritual Philosophy does not cover all the facts. On the contrary, it is the only theory that does this, and it alone treats the subject with becoming dignity. We can wait for others to take a wider view of the facts, and give them time to develop the acumen required to comprehend the sublime philosophy of Spiritualism.

I have but few words to add in conclusion. If *The Watchman* really believes that the communications from Spirits are " almost always far beneath the intellectual and moral attainments " of the reputed authors, it will give us pleasure to disprove this erroneous assumption whenever the Editor may signify a disposition to open his columns to the evidence.

Yours faithfully,

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, 165 EAST 49TH STREET, }
NEW YORK, Jan. 29, 1881. }

SHAKING THE ANCIENT TOWERS.

“WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?”

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, MARCH 5, 1881.

A Baptist's View of the German Professors—A Watchman Blinded by Lightning—Important Admissions—Cold Comfort for the Enemy—Mushroom Speculations—Indignation of Saints—Policy of Priestcraft—Falling back on the Dark Ages—Hymn of the Battle—Verdict of Christian Investigators—Asleep on the Watch-Towers of Zion—Humiliation of the Church—Fox Lake Representative—Reign of the Arch-fiend—Superstition yields to Science—Symbol of long Suffering—Crown of our Rejoicing.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

YOU may have observed that, since the date of my last letter, the secular and religious journals have been extracting portions of the article that recently appeared in *The Watchman* of your city, and was reviewed in my communication of the twelfth instant. The writer, in the interest of our Baptist contemporary, mentioned the fact that “the German professors have become vehement Spiritualists.” Their unequivocal testimony seemed to stagger his skepticism. Dazed by the vivid lightning with which the Spiritual Powers are rapidly illuminating the intellectual firmament of all Europe, he made admissions which are fatal to the claims of all heroic unbelievers. Acting under the strong impulse of the hour, he cast overboard the tools and stock in trade of the enemy—the worthless trumpery of those people who have put their trust in cunning tricksters, popular delusions, and general rascality, as furnishing a satisfactory solution of the modern mys-

teries. He finds it hard to believe the facts ; harder to get rid of them ; and hardest of all things to swallow the preposterous theories and shallow speculations which grow out of the decaying faith of the Church as naturally as toad-stools spring up from the mold of an old farmyard.

The only consolation left to the writer in the *Watchman* is found in reflections upon " the mental and moral imbecility of the messages " from the other world. If there are Spirits from another world who will show themselves in spite of the Church, and fraternize with sinners in such a scandalous manner as to excite the pious indignation of the saints, it seems to afford him some satisfaction to know that the minds of such intrusive spirits are fast fading out in the after-life, and that their morals are so low as to warrant the conclusion that they must of necessity be essentially damned already. The man who can derive consolation from such questionable sources may look for sunbeams in cucumbers and not be disappointed.

Seeing that the scientific philosophers of Leipzig are compelled to accept the facts, and that the professional jugglers can not master the alphabet of Spiritualism, he begins to look seriously at the subject. His present attitude is clearly enough indicated in the following brief extract from the article in the *Watchman* :

" We would discourage in the strongest manner the dabbling with Spiritualism on the part of most people. But *we think the time has come when Christian men with the necessary training of mind should investigate it seriously*, and reach some conclusion which will be accepted as the verdict rendered necessary by the facts."

Here the old device of priestcraft crops out in the Protestant church. The writer thinks it will never do for the people

generally to be “dabbling with Spiritualism.” He would keep the masses in ignorance of the facts which establish their immortality upon a scientific basis. He would bring back the darker ages when the common people accepted with unquestioning faith the views and doctrines prescribed for them by their arbitrary masters. The world is too far advanced, and this feeble attempt to reënthrone the powers of darkness will not succeed. From an immortalized Spirit of the New Dispensation—speaking through the mediumship of THOMAS L. HARRIS, in his stirring “Hymn of the Battle”—such men may learn the truth, apprehend what the Future will reveal, and perhaps be made to realize how futile are all such efforts to extinguish the light and arrest the progress of the world.

HYMN OF THE BATTLE.

“Can ye lengthen the hours of the dying Night,
Or chain the wings of the Morning Light?
Can ye seal the springs of the Ocean Deep,
Or bind the Tempests in silent sleep?

The Sun that rises, the Seas that flow,
The Thunders of Heaven, all answer, ‘No!’

“Can ye drive young Spring from the blossomed Earth?

The Earthquake still in its awful birth?
Will the hand on Time’s dial backward flee,
Or the pulse of the Universe pause for thee?

The shaken mountains, the flowers that blow,
The pulse of the Universe, answer, ‘No!’

“Can ye burn a Truth in the Martyr’s fire,
Or chain a Thought in the dungeon dire?
Or stay the Soul, when it soars away

In glorious life from the moldering clay?
The truth that liveth, the Thoughts that go,
The Spirit ascending, all answer, ‘No!’

“ Oh, Priest! Oh, Despot! *your* doom *they* speak,
 For God is mighty as ye are weak ;
 Your Night and your Winter from earth must roll ;
 Your chains shall melt from the limb and soul.
 Ye have wrought us wrong, ye have brought us woe—
 Shall ye triumph longer? We answer, ‘ No !’

“ Ye have builded your temples with gems impearled,
 On the broken heart of a famished world ;
 Ye have crushed its heroes in desert graves ;
 Ye have made its children a race of slaves.
 O'er the Future Age shall the ruin go ?
 We gather against ye, and answer, ‘ No !’

“ Ye laugh in scorn from your shrines and towers,
 But weak are ye, for the Truth is ours ;
 In arms, in gold, and in pride ye move,
 But we are stronger—OUR STRENGTH IS LOVE.
 Slay Truth and Love with the Curse and Blow ?
 The beautiful Heavens ! they answer, ‘ No !’

“ The winter Night of the World is past ;
 The Day of Humanity dawns at last ;
 The veil is rent from the Soul's calm eyes,
 And Prophets and Heroes and Seers arise ;
 Their words and deeds like the thunders go :
 Can ye stifle their Voices? They answer, ‘ No !’ ”

But the writer we are reviewing thinks it is now time that
 “ *Christian men with the necessary training of mind should investigate it seriously and reach some conclusion.* ” It is a little strange that it should be necessary at this late day to inform the writer in the *Watchman* that a million of trained Christians have already investigated. They have been taking testimony for thirty years ; they have weighed the evidence ; they have arrived at a conclusion, and rendered their verdict while

this poor watchman on the walls of the old Zion must have been fast asleep.

The enlightened minds connected with the secular press clearly perceive the fact that Spiritualism is advancing in all directions with a rapidity before unknown in the progress of religious ideas and philosophical views. Even now it gives promise of a speedy and universal triumph among all civilized nations. They also recognize the fact that the Church has lost its vitality; that in its attitude toward Spiritualism it is humiliated before the world, and that its position is weak and defenseless. This may be illustrated by a paragraph from the *Fox Lake (Wis.) Representative*. The editor prefixes the following note to portions of the *Watchman's* article :

“THE NEW PHASE OF SPIRITUALISM.—The extracts which we copy from an article in the *Watchman*, a leading Baptist paper of Boston, are significant as evidencing the wonderful progress toward general recognition which Spiritualism is making in the world. Ten years ago, it is safe to say, the *Watchman* would not have dared to publish such an article, even though easing its conscience, as by implication it does now, by attributing the phenomena to the Devil bugaboo.”

The writer of the above paragraph comprehends the situation. The truth is, since the press took the place of the pulpit as the chief agent in forming public opinion, the aforesaid “bugaboo” has been rapidly losing his influence over the human mind, while common sense, popular science, and spiritual philosophy have been coming to the front. At last the old theological *scare-crows* have lost their power, and can no longer be depended on to frighten the children.

Thus ends the reign of the Arch-fiend of darkness. At last the head of the old Serpent is bruised, and hissing basi-

lisks of Error crawl to their dens to die. Man's slavish fears of angry gods and death's unnatural terrors all depart. Cruel superstitions and painful rites, barbarous laws and all imaginary "goblins damned"—a foul brood hatched in the hell of ignorance and nursed by pious lunatics—all vanish under the retreating shadows of the old Night. We exchange the symbol of the world's crucifixion for the crown of our rejoicing! Earth is redeemed from the bitter agony of her great sorrows, and the morning stars sing together. Science comes to illustrate Truth and to illuminate the World, while the old teachers—wrapped in threadbare mantles—steal through twilight shadows to their open graves.

" Tradition, like the Moon
 Waning before the splendors of the morrow,
 Yet shining with wan light o'er crypt and tomb ;
 In whose pale ray serenest night-flowers bloom,
 In whose dim luster living men repose ;
 Gilder of ruins, though dark Evil's gloom
 Casting reflected beams, thine eye-lids close ;
 The Sun his golden veil above thy setting throws."

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, 165 E. 49TH ST., }
 NEW YORK, *Feb. 22, 1881.* }

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS FOES ON TRIAL.

DR. BRITTAN REVIEWS REV. DR. BOSTWICK HAWLEY.

FROM THE SARATOGA (N. Y.) EAGLE, FEB. 26, 1881.

Dr. Hawley on Spiritualism—Great Learning and Little Logic—Motion without Progress—The Doctor's Faith in Solomon—Opposition to Liberalism in Religion—Quoting from the *Apocatastasis*—Airing the Greek and Latin Classics—Ancient Sibyls and Priestesses—Death of the Old—The Paid Mourners—Paganism and Christianity—Polytheism and Spiritualism—Plurality of Gods reduced to a Divinity of Three Persons—Truth the only Authority—Careful Review of the Scripture Argument—The Signs do not follow the Clergy—Weighed and found Wanting—Spiritualism of the New Testament—Correspondence with the Spirit-World—One Hundred Thousand Letters Answered through one Medium—Heaven and Hell within Speaking Distance—Discussion between Abraham and Dives—Shall we insult the Angelic Visitors?—Blindness of Theological Dogmatism—Shameless and unnatural Cruelty—The Living taught to Dishonor their Immortal Kindred, Spurn their Loved Ones and Defame the Angels of Mercy—Crisis in the History of the Church—The Sacrilege of the Priesthood.

“He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him.”—*Solomon*.

To the Editor of the Saratoga Eagle:

IN the *Eagle* of the 8th ultimo I find an elaborate paper from Rev. Bostwick Hawley, D.D., bearing the somewhat ambiguous title of “Oscillations of Human Opinion.” These terms rather conceal than suggest the general drift of thought and the main purpose of the writer. However, the reader of only ordinary intelligence will soon discover that the author's object in the preparation of his essay was to discredit the just claims of Spiritualism. How signally he failed to accomplish this object will more clearly appear hereafter.

The introductory portions of Dr. Hawley's article consist of general observations on the idle vagaries of benighted and disordered minds ; the speculations of heathen philosophers and poets ; the "loose theorists" in science, philosophy and religion ; those unsettled souls who "swing forward into the *regions* of Christian emotion," wherever that country may be ; and the mere peddlers of "pseudo-scientific and semi-religious novelties." In all this the attentive reader may perhaps discover the dim outlines of a single idea struggling for evolution. This one imperfect conception of the mind, so obscurely revealed in the first part of the paper under review may be thus clearly expressed : This human world—all the elements of feeling, thought, purpose and action, forever move in cycles and epicycles—which the learned Doctor does not attempt to measure or otherwise define—and we are really making no progress toward the realization of a higher destiny for man. The writer appears to recognize the fact that in religion, not less than in the profane philosophies of this world, "there is scarcely a vagary or an error, however absurd, but has had its adherents." Through all this commingling and agitation of incongruous elements, he discovers no upward tendency or ascending spiral motion by which lower natures may hope to go up higher. He quotes the words of the ancient wise (?) man to prove that there is no progress in human affairs.

Where is the Infinite Intelligence and the Fathomless Love ? Did God improvise the creation merely for his own amusement ? According to Solomon and Dr. Hawley he manages to keep the vast machinery of the universe in perpetual motion, but really to no practical purpose. If any important end

was contemplated in the divine economy of the creation, they as yet perceive no specific adaptation of means to that purpose, nor do they discover that any progress is being made in that direction. Solomon has probably changed his mind on this subject before now, but we have not heard from him, and cannot, therefore, say this on any authority. They give us no promise that any great and beneficent purpose, commensurate with our necessities and our aspirations, will ever be realized. On the contrary, they belittle the God they worship, by representing him as going round and round on the same level like one in a tread-mill, traveling forever on the periphery of a horizontal wheel—moving without advancing and ever coming back to or finding himself at the starting point. This is a poor automatical conception of the divine nature and government. It is true that Dr. Hawley disclaims a strictly literal construction of Solomon's declaration; still he is pleased to illustrate his general idea by quoting his words as follows: "The thing that hath been is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun."*

* In presuming that there is no progress in this world; that the Supreme Mind really stands still forever, it appears that Solomon finds ready indorsers of his views among eminent Christian divines. They have baptized the dead body of his materialism in the name of Jesus. We confront those lifeless remains with the living inspiration of the German poet, Goethe, who makes a great advance toward the absolute truth when he says: "Nature is eternally producing new forms; that which is, never was before, and what once was, never returns. She is the only artist; bringing forth the most striking contrasts from the simplest materials, and leading up to the greatest perfection. She changes herself eternally, and with her there is no standing still."

It will be observed that while your honored contributor cordially accepts the authority of Solomon with an undefined qualification of the meaning of his language, we are made to understand that he has no respect whatever for liberal Christianity. This application of such a qualifying term as *liberal* seems to imply the possibility of progress in the Christian religion, and he cannot entertain such an idea and at the same time preserve a proper respect for King Solomon. He uses terms of animadversion when he says that "What is called 'liberal Christianity,' 'the new theology,' 'new ethics,' is only a restatement of an effete philosophy in Christian forms of expression." Thus at his word we are shut up to the unpleasant conclusion that Dr. Hawley's religion and theology are of the *illiberal* stamp. True liberality implies the largeness of conception, the expansion of mind, and the beneficence of purpose, which ennoble all feeling, thought, and action; but these great elements do not enter into this writer's conception of the nature and mission of his religion. To this acknowledged lack of the liberal element in his Christianity we may, therefore, ascribe whatever of unfairness, dogmatism, and bigotry may be found to characterize the gentleman's treatment of Spiritualism.

Not only the one idea already noticed as foreshadowed in Dr. Hawley's disquisition, but all the more important materials employed in the same, are derived from the "*Apocatastasis*," a work which really seems to have been composed for the purpose of airing the author's learning. We took an early opportunity, many years ago, to become acquainted with the contents of that book. It does not appear to have been

written with any serious purpose to disprove the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism. The author records many well authenticated illustrations of spiritual intercourse, chiefly derived from the Greek and Latin classics, without making so much as the feeblest attempt to dispute either their actual occurrence or their spiritual origin. Two features especially characterize this work: a pedantic display of the author's classical acquirements, and his utter inability to make any logical use of his abundant materials. If his book was ever intended to demolish the honest claims of Spiritualism, the author's failure is signal and complete. It has probably never disturbed the living faith of one soul, nor so much as ruffled the plumage of the dove which symbolizes the beautiful religion of the Spirits. With an honest desire to preserve the dignity of the profession—of which the writer was once a member—we must respectfully inform our clerical critic that *he is working that battery at too long range, and without once seeing the mark!*

Let us look at the peculiar method by which Dr. Hawley seeks to discredit the facts and principles of Spiritualism. He refers to the philosophers of the Pythagorean and Platonic schools in ancient Greece, and tells so much truth about ancient Spiritualism as to quite demolish the disjointed and slender fabric of his argument against the Modern Manifestations. The following passages will illustrate the manner of his treatment, in which he follows the example of the learned author of Apocatastasis. That book is the evangelical magazine and clerical armory from which he draws the weapons of his warfare against the Spirits. But we proposed to illuminate

the subject by some extracts from the essay, and the passages selected here follow:

“It was then the almost universal opinion of the populace that ‘the souls of the dead had much power and influence in human affairs, and that they could communicate with the living in various ways.’ Their household divinities, which were the spirits of their dead ancestors, presided, as they thought, over the fortunes of the family, and could be consulted in cases of doubt or difficulty. In Egypt, as now in China, all sorts of spirits were evoked, and consulted at the pleasure of the questioner. . . . It is paganism revived. It is an outgrowth of polytheism, against which the central thought of both Hebraism and Christianity direct themselves. Even ‘Plato the divine,’ as he was called because of some advanced ideas held by him in reference to the unity, spirituality and personality of God, in opposition to the atheism of the few and the polytheism of the many, taught that the *dæmons* (*daimones*) inhabit the air, are always near us, and know our thoughts—sentiments which he and Socrates gathered from the Jews who resided in Grecian cities.”

Still drawing on the author of *Apocatastasis* at sight, he quotes from Pliny to show how eager the scholarly Greeks were to accept the facts of Spiritualism. He reminds us that “the Sibyls were professional mediums;” so also were the Priestesses in the temples of the ancient oracles, and that “they were consulted by imperial personages on the great questions of governmental policy.” He observes that some of the mediums were clairvoyants, others were inspirational speakers; some were accustomed to write, and in many the bodily organs—subject to the action of the will—were controlled. In this connection he offers Tacitus as a witness; cites the testimony of Hermes to show that departed “souls or *dæmons* were caused to visibly enter images,” and Pesellus to prove that “celestial fire was made to appear, images to laugh, and lamps to spontaneously burn.”

Now, if we have sense enough to comprehend the import of all this, it is so much unimpeachable testimony to the truth of Spiritualism. The Doctor's witnesses are chiefly selected from the most enlightened and renowned people among all the ancient nationalities. The earlier Greek philosophers, poets, orators, historians and artists inspire mankind to-day. Though dead, in the apprehension of the sensuous world, their influence is still felt in every walk of life. Living or dead, the Greeks have done more to develop the æsthetic sense among the most advanced nations, and to promote our highest culture, than any other people, ancient or modern. I thank the Doctor for the recitation of the evidence of his witnesses. It is well suited to my purpose. Knowing how vain and ineffectual the effort must be, he makes no attempt to impeach their testimony. He makes no bold denial of the facts, nor does he seriously question their relation to spiritual causes. Spiritualism has no controversy with the witnesses to its truth. I am not here to dispute one word of the clear record of authentic history; but I come to admonish the gentleman that, having admitted this testimony, he can neither set it aside by supercilious indifference nor a pious ejaculation!

Dr. Hawley does not qualify his affirmation that Liberal Christianity is at best only the resurrection of a wasted body, or, to use his own words, it is the "re-statement of an effete philosophy" in a frail Christian disguise; while Spiritualism is boldly declared to be "Paganism revived." On the contrary, a Christianity that is not liberal is wholly unsuited to the spirit of the present age; and the future, instead of attempting to galvanize the lifeless forms of past ages into an

unnatural semblance of real life, will only see that the dead are decently buried. There are solemn people who always grieve over the death of the *Old*—hired mourners at such funerals—in whose minds every new birth in the realm of ideas is a revelation of diabolical mischief. Such souls must be allowed to afflict themselves, if they will, while we discover in the dying forms of stereotyped thought and the popular faith, the “shadows of coming events,” and the *postulata* which prophesy of the New Creation, wherein Truth shall be king and Righteousness be magnified among men.

But how does the author of the “Oscillations of Human Opinion” proceed to prove that Spiritualism is “Paganism revived?” Why, he shows us that the ancient nations, including their sages and philosophers—the chief lights which rendered their civilization glorious—believed in the existence of Spirits; in their power over the material elements and forces of this world; and that they exercised a constant and powerful influence in human affairs. Because they believed all this he presumes there is ground for a railing accusation against all modern believers, and hence the public is informed that Spiritualism is only the reänimation of Paganism. But this belief in Spirits was never confined to the ancient Greeks and Romans, nor to Paganism. It has been entertained by every nation and people under the sun, and will never cease to be the vital principle in all systems of religion.

Now if we hold Dr. Hawley to the logical deductions from his premises, he will probably find that he is proving too much to suit the average taste of the Christian ministry. Let us furnish an example of his own method of reasoning. The

ethics of the illustrious Chinese philosopher, Confucius, embraced a clear affirmation of the Golden Rule. Pythagoras—the great philosophical seer of Samos—instructed his disciples *to forgive their enemies*. Iamblichus regarded the soul of Pythagoras as a revelation from the God of Wisdom; in other words, as *a special incarnation of the Supreme Divinity!* Hence a poet sings of him—

“Pythias, fairest of the Samian race,
Bore from the embraces of the God of day
Renowned Pythagoras.”

It will never be denied that the Golden Rule and the instruction to forgive our enemies, embrace the divinest principles ever inculcated by Jesus of Nazareth. But as these great lessons of divine wisdom were taught by Pagan philosophers, respectively five and six hundred years before Christ, what follows as the logical sequence? The reader will please take notice, that *this is precisely what follows according to our critic's method of reasoning: The Sermon on the Mount was of heathen extraction, and the Doctor's Christianity, having the same origin, is only "Paganism revived."*

In the concluding part of his essay Dr. Hawley cites many passages of Scripture—all of which are familiar to every intelligent Spiritualist—to show us that the Bible is opposed to our doctrine and practice, and that it is a very wicked thing to have social and intellectual intercourse with Spirits of the other world. And here the learned gentleman unconsciously comes over to aid us by so much biblical knowledge as he has acquired. But slinging texts at the Spiritualists—without discrimination as to their import—is not likely to convince any

one that he is in error. Not one of the Doctor's quotations contains anything to disprove the real facts and fundamental principles of Spiritualism. Quite the contrary ; each passage cited assumes that the intercommunication between the two worlds is a fixed fact that no biblicist or other man with a personal experience may dispute. If the spirits are not insensible to the ludicrous aspects of the case, they must be amused at this illustration of *The Apocatastasis*—Progress Backward—in which a venerable Doctor of Divinity labors to prove the truth it is his purpose to deny.

I hardly need add anything further to disprove the assumption that Spiritualism "is an outgrowth of polytheism." It is impossible to trace any likeness of one to the other, and there is no historical or other evidence to support such a statement. *Polytheism is the recognition and worship of a plurality of gods.* The writer has a large acquaintance among Spiritualists, but does not happen to know of a single person among the thousands who is disposed to recognize more than *one God*. There are, however, several professed believers in the facts of spiritual intercourse who have no God at all. They had none before they witnessed the facts of Spiritualism, and they still hold on with unyielding pertinacity to their cheerless Atheism.* But there does appear to be a trace of the polytheistic faith and worship of the ancients in the creeds of orthodox

* Among the atheistical Spiritualists will be found, here and there, one of the leaders of radical thought. Among the more prominent persons of this class is Mr. Hudson Tuttle, who thus expresses his conviction: "Spiritualism should be the grand eclecticism which takes from all the best, the true, and carves over the portals of its temple the name of no worshiped God or priestly system."

Christianity, which demand our equal reverence of three several persons, each of whom is said to possess all the attributes of the Supreme Divinity.

Very naturally this brings us to consider the reason why several Hebrew writers condemned the intercourse with the Spirit-world as it was practiced by the early heathen nations. It was not the mere recognition of the presence of Spirits by the people of this world, or the simple interchange of thought between human beings in different spheres of existence—as this would always happen under suitable conditions—which formed the ground and furnished the occasion for denouncing the practice. *It was for the reason that finite Spirits of men, and even imaginary beings, were—in the popular conception—elevated to the rank of gods and worshiped as divine authorities by the superstitious multitudes.* The polytheistic features and aspects of the system rendered that intercourse pernicious; and it was this recognition of all these inferior divinities, to the neglect of the Hebrew Jehovah, that called down the stern denunciations of Moses and the Prophets. Among all men the Spiritualists would be the last religious body in the world to entertain the idea of reviving the polytheistic faith and worship of the ancient pagan nations. They are not hero-worshippers. They have not the excessive reverence which would render the apotheosis of any man a possibility in their history. As a people they have no agency in the business of fashioning and multiplying gods, either for themselves or others; and *those who have made much progress accept no authority, visible or invisible, but Truth demonstrated.*

Referring to the demons of the first century, Dr. Hawley

tells us that "*Instead of consulting them, Christ and his Apostles cast them out.*" But I must be allowed to remind the learned doctor that, according to the record—which is said to be infallibly true—Jesus did not hesitate to converse one day with a legion of devils through their spokesman ; and what is more, he graciously granted their petition that they might be allowed to enter into "a great herd of swine feeding" in "the country of the Gadarenes." (See Mark v. 2-13.) Now, if it was a wicked abomination in the sight of God to have intercourse with any Spirits of another world, why did Jesus allow himself to be interviewed by the chief speaker of a band of Spirits of so low a character that they found congenial mediums in the swine ?

But if Jesus and his early Apostles made it their special business to *cast out the evil spirits*, what are their successors in the sacred office about that they neglect to follow the example of their Master and his primitive ministers ? They profess to be authorized to preach under the same apostolic commission, which may be found in St. Mark's record of the Gospel, chapter xvi. The evangelist clearly defines the valid evidence of true discipleship, and the appropriate seals for official confirmation of the claims of a living minister of Jesus. The following extract from the original commission, the sanction of which is claimed by the Christian clergy of the present day, is as significant in fact as it is apparently meaningless in their apprehension of its import :

"And these signs shall follow them that believe : in my name shall they cast out demons ; they shall speak with new tongues ; they shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

It will be observed that the very first evidence required of a preacher of the Gospel, that he was duly called to the work of the ministry, was *his ability to cast out devils*. Some one, at least, of the signs enumerated was expected to follow as an authentication of his claims. As the "spiritual gifts" bestowed on the early believers were not in all cases the same, but as now were varied according to the innate capacity of the individual and the peculiar circumstances and requirements of the case, we may not insist on the trial by *poison*, since it may not be the specific function of any minister of our acquaintance to overcome the action of deleterious drugs. But every true Christian ambassador should submit his credentials, and he should, at least, be able to exhibit the power in some one of its several aspects. Those who can not—it must be obvious from the letter and the spirit of the commission itself—*must be classed among the unbelievers*; and it should henceforth be no heresy to question the validity of their appointment until the signs are forthcoming. *But do the signs follow as the only confirmation of the claims of the Christian clergy?* No; seldom or never. If there are any disorderly Spirits to be cast out in these days, the friends of the demoniac straightway send for a spiritual doctor, and for the reason that the Christian clergy by great occasions tried are found to be impotent. They believe in the regular professional remedies for demoniacs—*chloroform and a straight-jacket!* If we conclude to be generous and wait for these successors of the Apostles to vindicate their commission in the appointed way, some time will probably elapse before we shall be required to indorse their claims.

The assumption that Jesus and his prime ministers ever disapproved of the acquisition of spiritual knowledge, and that they condemned all intercourse with the Spirit-world, is without the smallest foundation in the New Testament. As the Christian ministers profess to be especially interested in the question, "What saith the Scriptures?" I propose to answer this inquiry by reading a few passages from their own "infallible (?) revelation." At the annunciation it is stated that "the angel Gabriel was sent" to Mary, his mother, to prepare her mind for the impending event. (Luke i. 26-31.) Again the angelic messenger appeared at his birth: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God." (Luke ii. 9-13.) We have already cited an instance in which Jesus held a conference with one of the devils he had cast out, and condescended to gratify the desire of the "unclean spirit," who said, "My name is Legion." At his transfiguration the spirits of "Moses and Elias" came visibly and conversed with him in the presence of three mortal witnesses—Peter, James and John. During the agony in the garden of Gethsemane, it is recorded, "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." (Luke xvii. 43.) When the multitude came out to arrest Jesus at the instigation of Judas, the Master informed the disciple who smote a servant of the high priest, that he could at will summon "more than twelve legions of angels," and that they would come to his assistance should he invoke their presence. (Matt. xxvi. 53.) According to the evangelical account, not merely "the veil of the temple was rent in twain" at the crucifixion, but "the saints which slept arose, and came out

of the graves after the resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." (Matt. xxvii. 51-53.) Nor is this all; other spiritual phenomena are on record as having occurred at his sepulchre, including the moving of a large ponderable body by the agency of a Spirit. It is affirmed that "The Angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow." (Matt. xxviii. 2-3.)

If we can credit the biographers of Jesus every important event in his career, from the conception to the crucifixion, was illustrated by some revelation of spiritual presence and power. His remarkable natural inspiration and the simple eloquence which was the highest reason set on fire by love; his ability to see objects outside of the field of ordinary observation and beyond the utmost limit of earthly vision; the power to discern what was in the minds and hearts of men; his masterly influence over disorderly spirits, and the healing efficacy of his touch, were all illustrative facts which belong to Spiritualism. The spirit at the annunciation, said to have been Gabriel; the angel at Bethlehem and the heavenly host that celebrated the nativity; the devil who is said to have placed Jesus "on a pinnacle of the temple;" the dove that descended at the baptism; the Master's colloquy with the legion through their own representative speaker; the appearance of Moses and Elias; the angel in the garden; the "more than twelve legions of angels" ready to respond to the call of Jesus; every instance in which a spirit was cast out of a mortal; every case of healing under his hand; the rending of "the

veil of the temple " and the rocks ; the angel rolling the stone from the door of the sepulcher, and the visible return of departed saints to Jerusalem—these, if they ever occurred, are all so many facts in Spiritualism—personal experiences in the life of a man whose very existence seems to have been such a spiritual phenomenon that he was long since deified by his disciples. That a part of his mysterious visitors were spirits of men is plainly stated. Such, at least, were Moses and Elias, and the saints who, though dead according to the mortuary record, were still alive in fact and visibly walked the streets of the Holy City.

Now, strange as it may seem, after the preaching of a religion supported by these facts, and with such a founder, for nearly nineteen centuries, we are summoned to a recitation of these phenomena in his history and a vindication of the truth by the repeated assaults of professed ministers of Jesus who have never yet been able to emphasize their claims to a true discipleship by a single evidence of their spiritual power. On the contrary, they insist that the living demonstrations of the Spirit-world all died out with the early Apostles ; and this, too, against the facts of authentic history, which prove that the original " spiritual gifts " remained in the primitive Church for more than three hundred years, and that they have often reappeared in all ages and countries, in and out of the ecclesiastical state. Alas for the Church when the doctors of its sickly divinity—giving no signs of spiritual life—*are as dead men*, and the people are taught to regard the facts of Spiritualism as a stench in the nostrils of the saints and an abomination in the sight of God !

So much respecting the Master. That his early ministers were all Spiritualists and mediums is rendered evident by so much as we have of their history in the book entitled "The Acts of the Apostles." Peter was inspired, and while preaching his impressive sermon on the day of Pentecost a spiritual inspiration was also imparted to the multitude, and then the spiritual afflatus came with a sound resembling "a rushing mighty wind ;" and there followed tongues of fire, the speaking of many mediums in languages they had never learned, and the conversion of thousands. Peter was likewise a trance medium, and subject to visions. While at Joppa he went up one morning on the house-top to pray ; there he fell into a trance, and had a significant vision which greatly liberalized his views and enlarged the scope of his conception of the gospel of Jesus. Peter and John were such mediums that the spirits were able to move the bolts and bars of prison doors, and let them out. Saul of Tarsus—the St. Paul of the New Testament—was knocked down while on his way to Damascus *by a good spirit*, purporting to be the Crucified. The proud Pharisee saw at midday a great light that paled the sun, and heard himself addressed by an audible voice, speaking out of the illuminated air, and in the Hebrew tongue. So powerful was the shock to the nervous system that Saul was blind for three days, while his interior vision was being opened that he might discern spiritual things. When Paul and Silas were incarcerated at Philippi, the spirits shook the foundations of the prison and frightened the jailer ; "and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." (Acts xvi. 25-30.) Of such a nature were the illustrations of in-

visible intelligence in the first century, by which the minds of men were inspired, and ponderable bodies moved with irresistible power.

In John the Revelator we recognize a trance medium of a remarkable type. He was in the solitude of one of the Grecian islands when "suddenly" he was borne away in the spirit, and the grand succession of the Apocalyptic Visions passed in review before him. The whole of this last book of the sacred canon consists of significant allegorical pictures presented to the vision of a medium *while he was entranced by the Spirit of some one of the elder prophets*. To a doctor of divinity I feel bound to submit the authority on which this is claimed. Here it is, and it shows how easily John—from excessive reverence and deficient reason—might have been led into the polytheistic worship of the ancient heathen nations: "And I, John, saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, *See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: Worship God.*" (Rev. xxii. 8, 9.)

These are some of the many facts, derived from Christian sources, which essentially belong to Spiritualism. Similar facts are now far too numerous for record. They are the tangible evidences of another life, and experimental illustrations of our intercourse with the Invisible World. And yet the troubled ghost of a dead theology, and the priestly guardians of a Church that has lost all evidence of its spiritual vitality—whose history is blackened by the sad record of a thousand

crimes—still howl at us through the midnight darkness of their disappointment and woe—“*Spiritualism is an unholy thing, and an abomination before God!*”

Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, gives a descriptive enumeration of the various “spiritual gifts” of his time, marked examples of all of which have come within the sphere of our own observation. Of all these he says: “Brethren, *I would not have you ignorant;*” and again, “*covet earnestly the best gifts.*” The apostolic injunction to “*try the Spirits,*” should be a sufficient warrant for every Christian to engage in a fearless investigation. This exhortation is profoundly significant. The idea of a *trial* of the Spirits not only implies that they are not all of the same class, or of similar character, and hence we must exercise a just discrimination; but *it also calls for a searching and exhaustive inquiry into all the facts.* When a man is put upon his trial we summon all the witnesses; all parties listen to them patiently; the counsel scrutinize, sift, and weigh the testimony; and then the tribunal is expected to render an impartial judgment. *When will the Church thus “try the Spirits?”* Instead of manifesting the least disposition to do this at present, the Rev. Dr. Hawley—who represents the Church in this particular instance—lifts up his hands in holy horror and exclaims, “Oh, my soul, come not thou into their secret!”

Now suppose a man should undertake to teach chemistry who had never been inside of a laboratory; or to lecture us on astronomy who had never looked through a telescope, and had not the first idea about the laws of planetary motion; what would the world say of such a man? It would not be

polite for me to conjecture the answer. But let us most respectfully admonish the gentleman and all of his class that *they must get into the spiritual arcana and discover the secrets of this inner world and life before they will ever be qualified to write on the subject to the edification of the public.* So long as they do nothing but stand outside of this realm of mystery, and pray to remain in ignorance of all it contains, other and wiser people may be excused for declining to join in the solemn farce of their devotions.

There is no longer any plausible excuse for so much clerical ignorance on this important subject, now that the open channels of communication with the Spirit-world are so numerous. When a single medium—DR. J. V. MANSFIELD, corner of Sixth Avenue and Forty-second Street, New York—has received answers, during the period he has been acting as the amanuensis of the Spirits, to more than one hundred thousand sealed letters, not less than ninety thousand of which have been vehicles of convincing evidence that they were dictated by Spirits of the invisible world, no one need be wholly uninformed on the most important question of the living age. If, however, they are determined to keep up their shutters and forever exclude the light ; if they will close their ears against the testimony of contemporaneous millions ; if they will run away from all knowledge as if a legion of devils were after them ; if they continue to pray aloud that their righteous souls may never witness these demonstrative proofs of their own immortality, they should at least cease to shock the common sense of modesty by opposing their ignorance to the knowledge of other people.

Free social intercourse with congenial natures is both pleasant and profitable. The reciprocal expression of feeling, of thought and sentiment, is not necessarily demoralizing, while by the commerce of ideas we meet so many phases of mind that our views of men and of things are constantly enlarged. Nor is there aught in the simple fact that two minds occupy separate spheres of being that can render such intercourse either criminal or unnatural. If the existence of higher and lower conditions of conscious being interposes impassable barriers, then age may not minister to youth nor wisdom communicate with ignorance. Those who maintain that all such intercourse between spirits and mortals—*human minds in two separate states of being*—involves a violation of some imaginary divine law, show their incapacity to expound their own sacred books. Indeed, the very men who profess to regard every example of such intercourse as a heaven-daring sin against God, explain the parable of the rich man and Lazarus as if it were an authentic history of events. The common evangelical exegesis makes it appear that Abraham in heaven argued an important question with Dives in hell. (Luke xvi. 19-31.) It is worthy of remark that both parties to the discussion recognized the important fact that a spirit might be sent either from heaven or hell to this world for a purpose. But if a free conversation between spirits in two distinct states or spheres of being is such a foul abomination, why was not "faithful Abraham" made to follow the other fallen angels which we read of in "Paradise Lost?"

With a few words respecting the abnormal and monstrous position assumed by the dogmatic ecclesiastics of Protestant

Christendom, I shall leave the whole subject to the consideration of the reader. The attitude of the Church is at war alike with the divine economy in the natural world, the laws and relations of the human mind and heart, and the Providence which regulates the development of religious ideas. If you have kindred and friends in heaven who are pleased to come and watch over your wayward fortunes in this world, the Church insists that you must not encourage their approaches, since to commune with them in any literal sense, even as friend with friend, is an abomination in the sight of God. If the departed wife comes to visit her lonely companion and the home made desolate by her absence—comes to prove that death has not extinguished the sacred flame that burned on the altar when life and love were new—the solitary one is required to spurn the loving presence as a minister of evil. If the faithful husband returns to the widow in her weeds *because true love is more enduring than the Church contract of marriage*, she is expected to crucify her woman's heart, and, in fear of God and her minister, to banish the true guardian of her life. Should the sainted mother come to her wayward boy, baptized in the fire of a love that many waters cannot quench—come to win him from scenes of dissipation and the selfishness of an unworthy ambition, he is admonished to disregard the sacred obligation of filial affection and to turn his back on the mother who bore him, for the reason that "*the Spirits are all evil!*" It matters not if they bring health to the sick, comfort to the sorrowing, and hope to the aged pilgrim on the brink of the silent river. All these manifestations must be regarded as the deceptive arts of the adversary of souls, who is thus "trans-

formed into an angel of light," only that he may make his diabolical purpose sure. If this is so, where, oh where is God? and how are his angels employed? Can ignorance, blind infatuation and sectarian bigotry further go and have immunity in the reverend name of Jesus of Nazareth!

When the young mother, grieving for her first-born, goes out beneath the soft moonlight of summer skies and the love-lighted eyes of Angel-watchers to weep over the little mound where the early hopes of maternal affection lie buried, she must never cherish the thought that the little spirit may still nestle in her own bosom, and even lay its gentle hand upon the throbbing heart to still the wild tumult of her grief! All this is Spiritualism; and these are the unspeakable consolations it brings to the bereaved and sorrowing heart. And yet we are solemnly admonished by grave divines that Spiritualism is not only destitute of any moral force—any humanizing and redeeming power; but that it is only a "putrescent heap" and the unholy ghost of an "effete paganism."

If the Protestant sects resolve to maintain this attitude toward Spiritualism, their days are numbered. The next century will complete the history of the Church militant and write its epitaph. A fire is kindled which will consume every unclean thing, and all the institutions which have outlived the period of their usefulness. Temples long desecrated by baptized infidels; altars polluted by unholy sacrifices; and not a single refuge of lies—however consecrated by time and the sacred traditions of men—will be spared in the coming ordeal. *The human soul is the earthly temple of the Infinite Presence.* The indwelling divinity will not desert the holy shrine. The

religious principle can never die ; and the true worshipers—such as *worship* “*in spirit and in truth*”—will be multiplied in the coming time. In great plainness of speech, and in all kindness of spirit, let us admonish the clergy that their zeal is not inspired by spiritual knowledge and the wisdom which is from above. Let them pause in their ruthless efforts to crush out the purest and noblest human attributes and bury them in the grave. Deathless, forever, as the soul, are the affections which bind us to the living and the dead. The effort to extinguish them, or to limit their exercise to this life, *is sacrilege!* Let no man dare to desecrate the spiritual temple of the living God!

The Spirit of the Times speaks as with the trumpet of an Archangel. It is the mighty voice that broke the deep silence in the young morning of Creation : LET THERE BE LIGHT ! Dark ages, like phantom shapes of ill, vanish in the distance. The Liberating Eras come to redeem Humanity, and Liberty now clothes herself with the majesty of Law. Here end the hierarchal despotisms that so long have enslaved the souls of men. Even now

“ The thunders of the Vatican fall dead,
 Geneva, Augsburg, Westminster, no more
 Shall pour their dread artillery of wrath
 On the sweet flower-fields where the children play,
 Or the glad homes where wedded lovers dwell.
 Break forth into thanksgiving, all ye saints
 And martyrs of humanity, who wear
 In Heaven's pure light the palm-branch and the crown :
 The day of Freedom dawns upon the World ! ”

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, 165 E. 49TH ST., }
 NEW YORK, Feb., 1881. }

THE MYSTERY REVEALED.

A NEW CLERICAL RATTLE FOR JUVENILE MINDS.

FROM THE DAILY ADVERTISER, AUBURN, N. Y., MARCH 23, 1881.

The Last Theory of the Rappings—Original if not True—The Mystery Unveiled by a Presbyterian Minister—Excitement at Hydesville—What Burgess Knows about a Bedstead—The Cunning of the Foxes—Pilgrims at the Mecca of Spiritualism—*Exposé* of the Trick—A Divine Uncovers the Mystery of Iniquity—"The Most Gigantic Sell"—The Rickety Old Bedstead Never Moved—Testimony of a Pious Witness—He says it "has Doubtless Returned to Dust"—In a more Vital Sense it still Lives—Like John Brown's Soul, the Spirit of that Bedstead "is Marching On"—The Rappings are all over the World—Burgess "Would not Disparage Spiritualism"—He only Offers "this Little Scrap of History"—Legend of the Seven Sleepers—The Last One Wakes from a Nightmare.

Editor of the Daily Advertiser :

MY attention has been called to the fact that an article, written by Rev. A. Park Burgess, and entitled "Manifestations," is just now performing the circuit of the press. It appears to have been originally contributed to the Mexico, New York, *Independent*. It reappeared in your paper of the date of the 7th ultimo, bearing the editorial indorsement that "The writer is one of the most popular and talented clergymen in the Presbyterian Church" of the region where he belongs; that he is "a man of large experience, earnest thought, and high culture," whose testimony is presumed to have weight. This information is important, for the reason that without it we might have reached a different conclusion. It may surprise some people to know that a man appointed

to a sacred office, and possessing the qualifications specified above, should trifle with his claims to honorable distinction by giving such a letter to the press.

The writer begins by characterizing Spiritualism as nothing else but "a strange delusion," and he proceeds to treat the subject seemingly under the misapprehension that it has no possible foundation but the "Rochester rappings." After referring briefly to Hydesville, and to the gentleman from whom the village derived its name, he describes the former residence of the Fox family—the scene of the early rappings—as "an old shell, dilapidated and gloomy, looking as though another term at Rochester rappings would knock it into kindling wood." In his characterization of the mediums—which I take the liberty to condense—he is pleased to say: "The girls were wide awake, ingenious and daring young misses, determined to 'raise a breeze' in one way or another." Then follows this remarkable explanation of the rappings, which is about as luminous as several hypotheses which have emanated from the pulpit:

"A certain old bedstead in a corner bed-room could be made with reliable certainty—by a little imperceptible motion of a person sitting on the edge of it—to produce a sound resembling a light rap. The girls discovered this fact and utilized it. They started the exciting cry that Spirits were there—the house was haunted—a person had been foully murdered in the cellar. The Spirit pointed out these facts with startling certainty. The excitement rapidly spread. Neighbors were called in, and in all their investigations they left the strange noises still shrouded in mystery. The poor old father and mother were 'dumbfounded' and partly convinced."

The reverend gentleman then portrays in his hyperbolic speech the increasing excitement among the people, and tells

how "thousands in a day" came to this "Mecca—the historic headquarters of their marvelous faith"—like pilgrims to a holy shrine, so that the fence-posts "for a mile became hitching places for teams. The whole town was in an uproar." How long this state of things continued does not appear from the testimony of this veracious historian of Spiritualism. But the crisis came at last, and the manner of its coming is thus described :

"A committee to investigate was chosen, of which Bailey D. Foster, one of my elders, and not yet a very old man, was a member. He with others, after the most ridiculous humbugging and excitement, detected the trick and exposed it. The crowd at once fell off; the public felt a deep disgust and indignation; the girls went away to Rochester, and did not live here any more; and everybody gave up the 'big thing' as one of the most gigantic sells and swindles recorded in modern history."

It would be quite impossible to enumerate the explanations which, from time to time, have been given of the rappings and other mysterious phenomena since the beginning of the spiritual movement. Few of these have recognized the laws and relations of mind and matter, or discovered so much as the smallest element of probability in their composition. But among these preposterous theories and groundless speculations, I can hardly recall one thing that seems to me more absurd and ridiculous than this bed-room exposition by Rev. Mr. Burgess. According to this grave divine, the rapping sounds were in the beginning, and they are now, dependent upon the instrumentality of that little, rickety "old bedstead in a corner" of the cottage at Hydesville. To say the least, he does not so much as intimate that they were ever produced elsewhere or in any other way. It was only necessary for

one of the girls to make "a little imperceptible motion" while "sitting on the edge of it," and thus the raps came with all the collateral evidences of an invisible intelligence. *Mirabile dictu!* No spiritual or other extra influence was either required by the nature of the facts or admitted to exist. This is the last solution of the spiritual mystery on the authority of a popular divine.

Let us cross-examine the witness. Is Mr. Burgess informed of the fact that, at a very early period in the history of these phenomena, the rappings were produced, with no less distinctness, before a public assembly convened in a large hall at Rochester? Was the little "old bedstead" taken from its place in the corner at Hydesville to Corinthian Hall, in order to supply the requisite material conditions for the production of the sounds? Is the gentleman who proposes to furnish facts for the future historian aware that when the Fox family first came to this city and held their *séances* at the old Howard House, there was no bedstead in the room? Does he know that the sounds came alike on table, floors, doors, and that they often occurred on the ceilings at least six feet above the heads of the mediums?

If Mr. Burgess, personally, has no knowledge of this fact, has he not at least good reasons for believing that the same sounds have occurred in the homes of millions in every part of the civilized world? Is he ignorant of the fact that the mysterious rappings have been heard in many public assembly rooms in both hemispheres; in the palaces of London, Paris, and St. Petersburg; in the temples of religion; in the halls of science; beneath the shadows of the Vatican; on the pyra-

mids of Egypt ; among the ruins of buried empires and in the silent mausolea of the illustrious dead ?

We are left to conclude that he has no knowledge of these facts, and that for this reason he is led to presume, that the personal presence of one of the Fox sisters and the intervention of that same "old bedstead," are still necessary to the production of the sounds. In the closing part of his letter to the press, Mr. Burgess says : "The old bedstead has doubtless returned to dust."

Alas ! that being the case the conditions are destroyed, and how can any more mysterious rappings possibly occur ? Shade of Solon ! grant us wisdom equal to the emergency. We are sure that this *avant-courier* of the coming historian of Spiritualism will have nothing to do with "the most gigantic sells and swindles" but to expose the same and denounce their authors. He says : "I would not disparage Spiritualism by this little scrap of history—of course not, by any means !" This will be a comfort to people of weak faith. We realize just *how* he is assisting us to exalt the truth in public estimation. At the same time it seems to us that his theory requires revision. Since the old bedstead is pulverized, does not the fact that the sounds still continue disprove the Burgess hypothesis and make it necessary for us to look elsewhere if we would discover the cause of the rappings ?

Here is a man reputed to be "one of the most popular and talented clergymen" of his denomination. He has been especially set apart and consecrated by the solemnity of his ordination for the work of explaining the mysteries of a Religion that claims a spiritual origin. He should himself pos-

sess and exercise the very gifts he refuses to recognize. On the contrary, he derides the legitimate powers and appropriate functions of the office which he professes to hold as a sacred trust, while he treats the whole subject in a manner at once so undignified and frivolous that he scarcely merits serious attention.

We are glad to be assured that the author of this theory is a man of influence ; that he enjoys the reputation of being a thinker and a gentleman of culture ; that there is a certain potency in what he has to say, owing to the fact that he is favorably reported for piety, stands well and is popular with his brethren. We have thought of all this with a serene satisfaction ; but after all it really seems to the observation of the writer, that *Rev. Mr. Burgess is just now speaking out of a restless and broken slumber of thirty years or more !*

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, 165 E. 49TH ST., }
NEW YORK, *March 20, 1881.* }

THE OPPOSITION IN BALTIMORE.

UNFRIENDLY ATTITUDE OF THE CHRISTIAN PULPIT.

WRITTEN FOR THE BALTIMORE AMERICAN.

Rev. Joel T. Rossiter on Spiritualism—The *Séance* at Endor—The Medium Vindicated—A Royal dead-head Investigator—Mistakes of the Preacher—A Divine treats Samuel coldly—He is not sure the Prophet put in an Appearance—Bold stand of Rev. Dr. Butler—How he Exorcised the Spirits—The Soulless Body at Endor—Puppet-show at the Transfiguration—How the Lord is supposed to have deceived Jesus, Peter, James and John—The Platitudes of the Pulpit—Character of the Religious Opposition to Spiritualism—A grave Divine quotes a Vulgar Jester.

To the Editor of the Baltimore American :

SOME one has sent me your paper of the thirty-first ultimo, in which I find a synopsis of a sermon on Spiritualism, by REV. JOEL T. ROSSITER, whose mind appears to be in a confused state in relation to the general subject of spiritual phenomena, and their relations to a Divine purpose in the moral government of this world. The text is taken from the interview between Saul and the woman of Endor, during which Samuel appeared ; the spirit was impressively described by the medium, and from that description was recognized by the royal visitor as the prophet. Saul had cruelly persecuted the Spirit-mediums of his time, and in order to avoid recognition "he disguised himself," and went to his *séance* in the night. But the moment the venerable form of the prophet appeared to the woman's vision she comprehended the fact that her visitor was the king. Knowing the fierce hostility of her royal mas-

ter to all of her class, she was naturally alarmed for her safety, but was assured that no harm should come to her. I extract the following passage from the report of Mr. Rossiter's discourse as published in your paper :

“Saul went to the witches. There is something remarkable in the fact that he should have recourse to those whom he had endeavored to turn out of the land. The good Spirits having deserted him, he goes to the evil spirits. When the spirit of Samuel arises before him, he tries in vain to quiet himself. What an awful *séance* was this! and it should teach us not to quench the Spirit.”

Let me here perform a simple act of justice in behalf of a respectable and noble woman—an ancient medium who has been remorselessly slandered by the Christian clergy for many centuries. She was a kind-hearted woman while she resided at Endor, and she must be a forgiving and peaceable spirit in heaven, or she would have haunted the Church that has so long defamed her before the world. Perhaps I can best vindicate her character and do some slight justice to her memory by showing the striking contrast in the moral characteristics of Saul and the medium of Endor. I am not in the habit of wasting many words on the average king, and a brief characterization will suffice for the present occasion. Saul was a proud and unscrupulous dissembler—a royal hypocrite, and in many ways a bad man. He appears to have occupied the good woman's time through the afternoon, for which he never gave her one shekel ; and then, to cap the climax of the royal meanness, he allowed the generous hostess to have the only “fat calf” she possessed butchered, and he and his attendants accepted her cordial invitation to supper. And this very selfish man and cowardly tyrant did not hesitate to hunt inno-

cent people out of his kingdom for doing precisely what he practiced himself at Endor.

Modern divines are accustomed to speak of the medium of Endor as "*a witch*;" but she is not so characterized in the Scriptures. On the contrary, she is referred to in respectful terms as "a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor." (I. Samuel xxviii. 7.) There is not a single word in the record to show that she was not in all respects a most reputable person. The narrative of her interview with the king renders it evident that while he had exercised his royal prerogative in banishing mediums from home and their country, he was quite willing, in a great emergency, to avail himself of the services of one of their number. It also proves—if anything can be proved by the Bible—that the medium was not only strictly honest, but that she was also a most unselfish and hospitable woman, by whose personal acquaintance and kind attentions even the king was honored. And yet strange and irrational as such conduct seems and is, this royal oppressor and hypocrite—this *very cowardly dead-head investigator of Spiritualism*, who went to a medium under cover of congenial darkness, because he was sorely distressed, for information which he could obtain in no other way—is represented as coming to us with all the majesty of infinite authority for his cruel persecution of mediums! This was the way "he served the Lord as if the devil was in him!" And this iniquitous business did not end with king Saul. No; we have yet to see the end of it. This worthy woman, in whose presence his unwelcome destiny was made known, has been defamed for centuries. Though honest beyond suspicion and generous far above re-

proach ; and, withal, possessed of rare "Spiritual gifts," as the record plainly shows, she still continues to be stigmatized by every Orthodox divine as *an old hag*, who, through "ways that were dark," was in league with the devil.

Mr. Rossiter is pleased to say that "*Saul went to the witches ;*" but the record, which he professes to regard as a divinely inspired revelation, contains no warrant for the statement. *Can it be necessary for him to "add to the words of the book," or to amend an infallible record? The medium at Endor is nowhere called "a witch,"* and it used to be quite orthodox to never assume to be "wise above what is written." In the opinion of the preacher it is "something remarkable that he (Saul) should have recourse to those whom he had endeavored to turn out of the land." Surely this is nothing remarkable in these days. There are many clergymen—we know some of them—who boldly denounce the Spirits before their congregations while, like King Saul, they "put on other raiment," or adopt some cheap method by which they expect to escape recognition when they go to consult Spirits of the other world. Dr. J. V. MANSFIELD, who resides at the corner of Sixth avenue and Forty-second street, New York—he is the writing medium through whose hand the Spirits answer sealed letters—assures me that much the larger part of his patrons come from the churches, and that many of them are ministers. During the anniversaries he is crowded with clerical visitors, who express astonishment and satisfaction at what they received from the Spirits, and then some of them go home and dishonor the claims of Spiritualism before their congregations.

Mr. Rossiter does not appear to be fortunate in his elucida-

tions. One has only to take a single brief sentence from the passage already quoted to show the maximum of dogmatic assumption and the minimum of truth. Here is an illustrative example, which we emphasize : “ *The good Spirits having deserted him, he goes to the evil spirits.*” The truth is, Saul did nothing of the kind, nor had the good Spirits entirely deserted him. This two-fold statement derives no support whatever from the biblical history. On the contrary, if the gentleman’s infallible authority has any weight, it completely demolishes his assumption. When Saul went to the medium, instead of soliciting an audience with evil demons, he expressly said to the woman, “ *Bring me up Samuel.*” (I. Sam. xxviii. 11.) The fact that Saul called for Samuel, and for no one else, proves that he was not seeking intercourse with evil spirits ; and the additional fact that Samuel came promptly when his presence was invoked, proves that the good Spirits had not entirely forsaken the king. Perhaps the whole Jewish history, from Moses to Jesus, does not furnish an example of a better character than that of the prophet Samuel. But he now falls under condemnation because he ventured to show himself one day after “ all Israel lamented him ” as dead, and his friends had made sure that he was decently buried in his native city of Ramah. The Christian clergy appear to have taken offense because he came back after death ; and, more especially, for the reason that in so doing he confirmed the pretensions of an old woman who is presumed to have served the devil by her mediumship.

It appears from the report of the discourse in your paper, that Mr. Rossiter does not like to believe that the immortal

spirit of the good prophet really came from the other world and gave convincing evidence to sinners of his actual presence. Unhappily this would be a verification of the claims of the person whom, by way of reproach, he calls "*the witch of Endor.*" He comprehends the fact that such an admission would wholly unsettle his premises in the argument against Spiritualism. Mark with what caution he attempts to evade the force of the significant fact which he has not the temerity to dispute. This is the way he balances himself for a moment on several implied possibilities, and then takes a leap into the darkness of uncertainty and that imaginary paradise where "ignorance is bliss :"

"This mysterious appearance is not explained up to the present day. Saint Augustine says, by some mysterious dispensation of the Divine will, the witch was allowed to call up Samuel himself. Others hold to the belief that God allowed the spirit of Samuel to appear to the discomfiture and astonishment of the witch, and sent his own prophet from the grave to accuse Saul. In the book of Ecclesiastes, it is said, Samuel prophesied after his death and told the king his end. But we will leave this matter as one unknown and uncertain, remembering that curiosity to know the difference between good and evil was the commencement of sin."

It will be observed that the preacher does not like to credit the fact of the actual appearance of Samuel. He is not sure that the prophet was there. Indeed, he affirms that "this mysterious appearance is not explained to the present day." And then, with more deliberation, *he disproves his own statement by citing the explanations of Saint Augustine and others.* He deprecates investigation, and thinks the curiosity which prompts it is incipient "sin." The undeveloped condition in which man is utterly unable to distinguish "the difference between good and evil" is, in his judgment, the safest for all

men. This condition of mind is infantile to the last degree. He finally concludes to "leave this matter as one unknown and uncertain."

In his citations of the opinions of eminent men, respecting that spiritual visitation at Endor, Mr. Rossiter might have added that of the Rev. C. M. Butler, D.D., published twenty-seven years ago, when that popular divine was the rector of Trinity Church, Washington, D. C., and also Chaplain of the United States Senate. Perhaps this occurred before the reverend gentleman entered upon his ministry, or for some other reason it may have escaped his observation. I will therefore ask his attention to it in this connection :

"It is to be remarked, moreover, that among all the strange and miraculous events of both dispensations, *there is not one instance on record of the manifestation of a disembodied human spirit to the minds of men.* Samuel appeared to Saul under the incantations of the Witch of Endor as much to the surprise of the sorceress as to the terror of the impious king. But it was not the disembodied spirit of the prophet which manifested itself to Saul. It was his body, or a visible representation of his body, which God miraculously summoned for his own wise purposes."

Here the learned Doctor, being "wise above what is written," affirms that "there is not one instance on record of the manifestation of a disembodied spirit." Samuel was not at Endor at all ; he was somewhere else ; Dr. Butler and Mr. Rossiter do not know exactly where, probably because Samuel does not report his movements to the ministers' association. *Only the prophet's "body" appeared, "or a visible representation of his body which God miraculously summoned."* That is to say, the All-wise Creator of the Universe is presumed to have vindicated the claims of that "old witch" by a special miracle, in

which he created an automaton figure to deceive Saul, and then caused it to move like a living man by a special application of the Divine Will! Here the Supreme Being is represented as the manager of *a mere puppet-show!* If this is not blasphemy under the canon-law, would it not be well to employ a committee of respectable Infidels to revise the Church definition?

Judging from your report of Rev. Mr. Rossiter's sermon, he does not appear to be so confident of his authority under the apostolic commission as some of his brethren. Dr. Butler did not hesitate, but swept the whole spiritual field with his besom. He disposed of Moses and Elias in the same summary manner that he dismissed Samuel; and all the other Spirits of men who have ever dared to revisit the earth were instructed to leave in the same shadowy train. His summary method of exorcism was the clerical *ipse dixit*, and behold their immortal spirits were not permitted to show themselves anywhere about this terrestrial ball! Instead of a number of deathless spirits appearing to men in the flesh, we have only so many *soulless bodies*, made up of common earth, water, and air, all for the purpose of a spectacular and deceptive exhibition! Jesus, Peter, James, and John, indeed, appear to have believed that the Master was really honored by the spiritual presence of Moses and Elias at his transfiguration. But no; we are admonished that instead of such illustrious witnesses, the Lord determined to have no such devilish proceedings, and hence only set up in the mountain two *hollow shams* for inspection, merely to illustrate his power over the elements of matter, and to astonish Jesus and his disciples!

It is not in the power of Mr. Rossiter to damage Spiritualism by stooping to the low level of the stale and unprofitable platitudes which he repeats in the middle and concluding portions of his desultory discourse. He puts into his sermon the same old threadbare objections, which—though they have been answered a thousand times—never had any force among intelligent people. *He draws on his imagination and the vulgar jests of poor wit-snappers for his facts.* Here are some examples, taken at random, of his undignified and trifling treatment of a grave subject :

1. "After a spirit has been enthroned in heaven it can't write as well or as grammatically."

This statement is a misrepresentation ; but as the preacher is evidently not at all acquainted with the real facts, we must wink at his want of correct information, and forgive his unwise and uncharitable assumption. Further knowledge will enlighten his mind and enable him to revise his judgment.

2. "The followers of Spiritualism are constantly in a nervous condition, which brings about a ruined mind."

The circle of our acquaintance among Spiritualists is rather extensive, and embraces thousands of persons in all ranks of society, from the humblest people up to the most eminent authors, inventors, artists, merchant-princes and scientific philosophers in the civilized world ; United States Senators, distinguished jurists, Generals in the Army, and Bishops in the Church. But we have never observed that these people are more nervous than other men and women. Instead of their minds being *ruined*, they are not only, as a rule, calm, thoughtful and self-possessed, but they are, in some important sense,

even now engaged in shaping the more liberal faith, the more comprehensive science, and the deeper and more spiritual philosophy of the better time coming.

3. "It (Spiritualism) has shorn down hosts of the brightest and most intellectual minds in the world."

This involves the admission that the finest intellects have embraced Spiritualism. Our own observation confirms the truth of what is here distinctly implied, but we were not looking in this direction for a recognition of the fact. We know of many persons whose minds have been greatly exalted and illuminated by Spiritualism. The angel of a new dispensation has placed in their hands the keys which unlock the spiritual mysteries of the beautiful Hereafter. On one point, however, we are much in need of further light. Will it be convenient for Rev. Mr. Rossiter to introduce us to the "hosts it has shorn down" among "the brightest and most intellectual minds in the world?" "*Shorn down*" we suppose means, clipped from the surface; abridged with respect to space; or curtailed—which, how, and to what extent?"

4. "When the steamer *Atlantic* was missing, the witch was called on, and numerous instances are known where the news she gave, that the vessel went down with all on board, drove the hearers to a lunatic asylum."

It so happens that the present writer was familiarly acquainted with the medium and the material facts connected with the case of the steamer *Atlantic*. We respectfully ask the preacher to give the public the name of "the witch . . . called on;" also a list of the "numerous instances known," the number and the names of "the hearers" who went to "a lunatic asylum" as a consequence of her revelations.

5. "You cannot hold the Bible in one hand and Spiritualism in the other."

Holding the Bible in one hand need not prevent any one from holding on to Spiritualism with both hands, and taking it into the mind and heart. All that is most vital in the book consists of the facts which belong to the Spiritualism of all ages. The truth is, if the Church insists on rejecting the demonstrated spiritual facts of the present, positive science and a materialistic philosophy, like a resistless tide, will sweep away the claims of all its sacred books and traditions as the *débris* of earlier times.

6. "Spiritualism calls up Tom Paine to testify that he is stopping in the same place in heaven as St. Paul. They that do these things are an abomination to the Lord."

This is not the product of a spiritual mind. While we see no particular reason why St. Paul and Thomas Paine may not meet on friendly terms in the Spirit-world, *we do see very clearly that this is the shallow invention of a profane jester who some time ago set up for a wit, but never achieved any great distinction.* This vulgar attempt to be facetious at the expense of the Spiritualists had its origin in a newspaper office in this city. Its author was opposed to Spiritualism, as his poor effort to ridicule the whole subject should have rendered apparent to any mind of ordinary intelligence and refinement. But the preacher quotes the words of an irreverent jester as coming from the Spirit-world because, we may suppose, it suits his taste and furthers his purpose to do so. If Mr. Rositer is right in saying, "They that do these things are an abomination to the Lord," it is time for all such enemies of the

truth of Spiritualism to take warning from their own preaching, and make haste to cleanse themselves of this abomination. They close their eyes to the light ; they shut their ears to all human testimony, and then judge and denounce, *ex cathedra*, the truth they will not understand.

Only our adversaries can possibly suffer from the course they have adopted. Happily the progress of science and the practical assertion of the inalienable rights of man, and the essential principles of free government in our political institutions, have placed the governing power in the hands of the people. The trembling mortal no longer pales before the terrors of the Inquisition. Democracy does not respect the claims of tyrants, in either Church or State, but makes it convenient for them to go into retirement. If in some enlightened countries, crowns are still inherited like other chattels, they are chiefly worn as ornamental insignia by those whom the people are pleased to honor, rather than as symbols of irresponsible power. The philosophical Spiritualist represents this advanced state of society. In the free championship of his doctrines he uses no weapon but "the sword of the Spirit." With a profound sense of composure he can afford to work and wait for the triumph of Truth which is sure to come.

S. B. BRITTAN.

THE LEXINGTON, }
NEW YORK, *March*, 1881. }

THE WAY SPIRITUALISM IS EXPOSED.

HOW THEY PLAY THE FARCE IN DUBLIN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SHAUGHRAUN, IRELAND.

A Bogus Medium on the Rampage—The pious Mountebanks—Serving the Lord and the Jugglers—The Farce of Exposure—Saints pay for the Exhibition—Mysterious personal Disappearance—The fine Art of Deception—How a Rogue pursued his Occupation—The Secret let out in Ireland—Fools practicing their Folly—Madmen rave while the Stars shine and Heaven is Serene—Lights on the Headlands of Time—An Angel standing in the Sun.

To the Editor of the Shaughraun :

I N a late issue of your paper I notice an article entitled “Second Sight Exposed, by an Ex-Medium,” in which the writer professes to uncover the mystery of iniquity known as Modern Spiritualism, and to reveal the naked deformity of its disciples. In the following extract we are favored with the writer’s estimate of the whole spiritual fraternity, which is not more complimentary than the published opinions of many of his class. I quote from his introductory paragraph :

“ I must confess that I have never met any class of men so utterly depraved, so entirely wanting in respect to mankind or reverence to God, as those outrageous and blasphemous rascals who work the Spiritualistic business. The spirit-circle and the animated furniture share places with the dark *séance* and second-sight. The first two are carried out in a *quasi-private* manner ; the latter were, at the start, entrusted to certain prestidigitateurs who traveled from town to town, giving, under the name of jugglery, an extraordinary entertainment, which public ignorance connected with the spiritualistic—a belief not at all discouraged by the nimble-fingered gentleman who owned the ‘show.’ ”

There have been many so-called exposures of Spiritualism

in this country and in Europe. Several poor jugglers and a multitude of pious mountebanks have engaged in the business, and it may be that some found it profitable. The scientists are quite willing to have it exposed, because they would be pleased to get rid of all such obstinate facts as are likely to upset the whole materialistic formula of the schools of science and philosophy. Then the miracle-mongers, curiosity-seekers and common idlers enjoy the exhibition. In our religious circles there has also been a lively demand for the services of the exposers. The experts in this line have had a good time; and the saints—who so love to have “spiritual wickedness” exposed in “high places” and low places too—have sold tickets, advertised the performances, occupied chief seats at the bogus *séance*; and at last, when the slippery performers have suddenly disappeared—like “the little joker which now you see and now you don’t”—they have purchased a valuable experience by paying for the use of halls, carburetted hydrogen consumed, janitor’s services, and other expenses.

This happened not long ago (we are credibly informed) in New York, to a learned doctor of divinity and several of his people. Some one was leaky, and the fact escaped the custody of the faithful. They had employed the cunning trickster to expose Spiritualism. The men of God could not do it effectually, and so they went after a juggler! His last trick was a *mysterious personal disappearance between two days*, with the aggregate receipts of the exhibition. Having served the pious purpose of his godly employers, he left, presto! “for parts unknown.” Each saw his little ill-fortune in the unpaid bills of his lively and accomplished coadjutor.

The juggler vanished while he turned the wheel,
But never a saint thought it best to squeal.

Let us see how Spiritualism is exposed in *The Shaughraun*. In his preliminary observations the writer assures us that "the animated furniture" is moved by "natural laws;" that "the dark *séance* is now thoroughly known," and that the only remaining mystery is "Second-Sight." *Having made a special study and practice of this particular phase of the "outrageous and blasphemous spiritual rascality,"* he can presume to speak with authority. He declares that *it is all a trick*, and he proceeds to elucidate his own peculiar method of performing the same. His exposition is contained in four columns of as melancholy reading as one may ever find elsewhere outside of a graveyard. He gives us a little sketch of his life, showing how he came to practice as an "outrageous and blasphemous rascal," in the "*spiritualistic business.*" At an early age he became a pupil of a *prestidigitateur*, and he worked with a lively zeal for his master at the jugglery occupation. According to his own showing, he was a promising scholar and made very gratifying progress in the fine arts of deception. It would seem that *the one characteristic feature of all his work for years consisted in making things appear to be what they were not.* His exposure of Spiritualism shows that he is still engaged in the same general line of business, notwithstanding he now boldly professes to have abandoned "the horrid trade" some years since.

We are rarely enlightened and we long since ceased to be amused by the exposure farcé; but still, though there is nothing new, the play goes on and the groundlings are pleased. Every few days some new discoverer turns up who is anxious

to divulge the whole secret for a price, or for nothing. We sometimes wonder if it be possible that these harmless lunatics seriously believe they are exposing anything of consequence. Showing us either a mere trick, or the everlasting brass of an unblushing countenance, is surely no exposure of Spiritualism. This is really a very childish occupation. The ambitious little boy may aim his pop-gun at either the Greater or the Lesser Bear ; but Arcturus will remain and the pole-star shine on. If there were less of this wild and random shooting on the part of the enemies of Spiritualism, we should be disposed to think that this Hibernian journalist was attempting to perpetrate a huge joke at the expense of his readers. To elucidate the phenomena of Spiritualism—which are immeasurably diversified in form and world-wide in their occurrence—he tells us how he contrived to deceive the good people of Ireland for such small wages as he was able to command. If we accept his testimony and believe that he really sold himself to the adversary for what he was worth, more or less, pray what has that fact in an ignoble personal history to do with Spiritualism? Nothing whatever. The subjects are as opposite as light and darkness. All his shallow tricks, performed for a few pence, throw no possible light on the great question of the ages. We are happy to know that no possible measure of deception can annihilate a single fact in the soul's experience. Clouds can not veil the immortal Illuminati, nor can selfish passions and popular skepticism avert the destinies of men.

The truth of Spiritualism is the light of the world! It will shine and grow brighter to the perfect day. It will be a blessing even to the most benighted, abandoned and hopeless of

its enemies, whose futile efforts and unworthy devices might excite contempt in honest minds if they did not make a still stronger appeal to our compassion. In vain are all such attempts to hide the light. The writer in your paper might as well be employed in stirring up a mud-puddle with a view of extinguishing the Pleiades. At last invisible hands have placed strong lights upon the headlands of Time, where the adverse powers of earth and hell can reach them no more. Darkness is no concealment. The constellations shine with the greatest brilliancy at midnight. So shine the truths of our sublime philosophy. Its morning glories like a flaming scarf already wave far above the horizon, while a mighty Angel, standing in the sun, proceeds to unroll the illuminated scroll of the Spiritual Heavens ! -

S. B. BRITTAN.

SECULAR PRESS BUREAU, }
NEWARK, N. J., *June*, 1881. }

SPIRITUALISM AND THE GREEK CHURCH.

ANOTHER BOLD ASSAILANT SHIVERS HIS LANCE.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

Spiritual Phenomena, Subjective and Objective—The Seer of Stockholm—Rev. John Wesley—Father Bjerring and the *Oriental Church Magazine*—Modern Spiritualism—Battle with Materialism—Infidelity giving up the Ghost—The Masters of Modern Science and Philosophy—The Owens Discover their Immortality—Dr. Hare's Spiritoscope Leads to his Conversion—Prof. James J. Mapes, LL.D., Surrenders at discretion—English Scientists and German Philosophers—Hiding the Truth and Falsification of History—"The Evil Eye"—Fox Family Fictions by an unknown Writer—Is the Shade of Munchausen here?—The Tangled Web—Dr. Kane, the Arctic Explorer—His Affection for Margaretta—Love Surrenders to Personal Ambition—Conclusion.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

THE Phenomena of Spiritualism, subjective and objective, are at least as old as authentic history and co-extensive with the development of the religious idea, as illustrated in the experience of all ages and countries. People who imagine that the subject belongs exclusively to the present generation are utterly ignorant of the basis of the great religious systems of the world. The phenomena resulting from the near relation and intercommunication of the two spheres of being—visible and invisible—are at the foundation of all religion; and the man who does not perceive and comprehend this fact is not qualified to become a teacher in the highest department of human knowledge. Physical science regards the elements, forms and phenomena of this world and the present life. Religion and worship, rising above the low level

of corporeal existence and sensuous perception, manifest the spiritual nature in man and recognize his supra-mundane constitution and relations. The soul reaches out after the ultimate sources of life and the springs of universal causation. Thus Religion takes hold of the objects of the invisible creation and the sublime realities of the future and eternal life of the spirit. It is for these reasons, especially, that Religion, in a comprehensive sense, embraces the highest department of human knowledge. Hereafter it will be made to appear that the proper domain of *science comprehends the universal field of investigation—every human discovery and all formulated knowledge of both the material and the spiritual spheres of being*—the fleeting aspects of “the life that now is” and the immortal realities “of that which is to come.”

The history of Modern Spiritualism properly dates from the advent of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg and Rev. John Wesley. The former was the most accomplished scholar of his age, at the same time he was endowed with the most remarkable “spiritual gifts;” whilst the latter—living at the same time—was the founder of one of the principal branches of the Protestant Church. The experience of Swedenborg illustrated the *subjective* forms of the Spiritual phenomena, or those which relate to individual consciousness rather than to external observation. These include the opening of the interior channels of perception, visions and revelations of the Spirit-world, and direct inspiration from the heavens, or superior spheres of intelligence. Contemporaneous with these experiences of the Seer of Stockholm were the *objective* or external phases of the Spiritual phenomena—addressed to the physical organs of

perception—illustrated in a most wonderful manner at Lincolnshire, England, in the house of the celebrated founder of Methodism. The essential facts in the Spiritual experience of those distinguished men belong to the world's religious history. The powers of darkness cannot obscure so great a truth. This is indeed the source of the soul's illumination—"the dayspring from on high." According to an Evangelist, "The light shineth in darkness," while the ages have not comprehended its significance; and yet neither ignorance nor falsehood can extinguish its glory.

Notwithstanding Spiritualism rests on the general experience of mankind in all ages, and is fundamental in every system of religion that has exerted any considerable influence on the general character and moral development of the human race, yet here comes a modern Solomon in the person of a contributor to the *Oriental Church Magazine*,* who solemnly assures us that the whole system rests—with its acknowledged millions of believers—on no more substantial foundation than *a mere trick*, originated "a little over thirty years ago," by two little girls in Wayne County, New York. Nothing could surpass the utter absurdity of this story, and yet we are not pre-

* *The Oriental Church Magazine* is conducted by Rev. Nicholas Bjerring of the Russian Chapel on Second Avenue, New York City. It is a Quarterly, and designed to elucidate the essential principles and ritualism of some eighty-five millions of Christians, and otherwise to further the interests of the Greek Church in America. The present writer has no knowledge of "R. W.," the contributor whose assumptions it is proposed to briefly review, except such information as may be derived from his essay, and this justifies the inference that he is quite ignorant of the subject on which he essays to enlighten Father Bjerring and the good people of his communion.

pared to say that the author is crazy. Perhaps he does not believe it himself, but finds a pleasant pastime in thus playing on human credulity. If he does not believe what he says, he deserves to be sharply rebuked for this attempt to mislead others. If, on the contrary, he really has faith in the truth of his own statement, it may be useless to attempt to reason with him, and it were wiser, perhaps, to leave such a man to the tender care of those ministers of mercy who preside over the state of such as have taken leave of reason and their senses.

The gentleman who kindly undertakes to illuminate the Greek Church starts off with the assumption that an unreasoning credulity is the corner-stone of Spiritualism, and that people are prone to believe it, not because of the existence of any important facts illustrative of its claims, nor yet for the reason that the laws and relations of the human mind render spiritual intercourse both natural and inevitable, but especially because *so many people have this perverse disposition to believe what they want to have true*. I will, as far as convenient, give "R. W." the benefit of putting his peculiar views in his own forms of expression, which—as the reader will observe from the examples which follow—are seldom remarkable for either elegance or force :

"What we want to believe we do readily believe. This truth is the corner-stone of Modern Spiritualism, and on it has grown a vast structure of delusion and charlatanism. . . . The weak and credulous believe in the end what they want to believe."

This writer would have his readers accept of the implied assumption that the millions who this day acknowledge the just claims of Spiritualism, were not only all waiting impa-

tiently for its advent, but were so anxious to believe, with or without evidence, that the trick of any juvenile juggler was accepted as the demonstration of a divine reality. Could anything be further from the real facts of the case than this reckless misrepresentation? The truth is everywhere revealed, and, at this late day, should be known by all men, that there are thousands of eminent persons in the spiritual ranks who fought against the truth with all their powers, and until absolutely forced to yield in the unequal contest. Robert Owen, the most noted infidel of the last generation, may be taken as a representative of many who have exhausted every device which a cunning skepticism could invent, and after all have been obliged to surrender to the Spirits. Robert Dale Owen, who inherited his father's stubborn unbelief, followed in the footsteps of his sire, and died a devout believer in Spiritualism.

Prof. Robert Hare, M. D., of world-wide reputation as a scientist, determined to save certain of his credulous friends from disgrace and insanity; and with this object in view he invented *the spiritoscope, and other apparatus*, in the confident expectation of utterly exploding the pretensions of Spiritualism upon scientific principles. The use of his own instrument led to his speedy conversion. So far from wanting to be convinced of the truth of spiritual intercourse, his mind rested in the foregone conclusion, that the whole system was a stupendous falsehood. Intent upon exposing the fraud, he placed the medium in such a relation to the instrument that she could not possibly see the face of the revolving disk of the spiritoscope. With such fraud-proof conditions the index was made to point to the letters of the alphabet, one by one,

when, to his utter amazement, his father said to him, "*Oh, my son, listen to reason!*" On another occasion the spirits, addressing an eminent lawyer in the presence of Dr. Hare, said :

"Light is dawning on the mind of your friend ; soon he will speak trumpet-tongued to the scientific world; and add a new link to that chain of evidence on which our hope of man's salvation is founded."

At length the stubborn skepticism of a lifetime gave way before the overwhelming proofs of spiritual presence, and repeated demonstrations of the power of invisible beings to act on the subtle elements of the physical universe ; to produce a variety of sounds, and to move ponderable bodies by a force far superior to the laws of matter. The late Prof. James J. Mapes, LL.D., the eminent agricultural chemist, was another of our material philosophers who was reluctantly forced by irresistible evidence to surrender the weapons of his warfare, and to accept the truth, which, while it humbled his pride as a scientist, assured him of his immortality.*

Some of the more distinguished English scientists and German philosophers have been convinced in a similar manner, by evidence obtained under test conditions. The writer under review unwittingly admits that there is no unbelief sufficiently ironclad to resist the force of the evidence in favor of the spiritual origin of the manifestations. After finding the corner-stone of Spiritualism in the *excessive credulity* of the believers he says :

* The present writer was intimately acquainted with Doctor Robert Hare and Prof. James J. Mapes, and had every opportunity to become familiar with their views on scientific and spiritual questions.

“Another class which eagerly embrace Modern Spiritualism are *religious skeptics*. . . . They substitute for Christianity a belief which places no moral restraint upon them. . . . It is infidelity run wild into credulity.”

There is evidently something anomalous in the fact that the most credulous and, at the same time, even the most skeptical classes embrace Spiritualism ; and the phenomenon which this writer notes should have convinced him that there is something more in the subject than a clever piece of jugglery. But there are some people who never learn anything from observation, and to whom childish fancies, shallow sophistries, profound principles, and the most significant facts, are all of equal importance. This Oriental Church representative appears to belong to this class, since he attaches more importance to his own whimsical notions than he does to the essential principles and demonstrated facts which are now rapidly revolutionizing the faiths and philosophies of the whole civilized world.

But what does this man mean when he tells the disciples of the Greek Church that those who embrace Spiritualism “substitute for Christianity a belief which places no moral restraint upon them ?” If “R. W.” does not know that this is utterly *false*, he is too ignorant to assume a leading *rôle* among religious teachers. If he does know that this statement is forever at war with the facts in the case, what can he ever hope to gain by such shameless misrepresentation ? *Spiritualism releases no man from any “moral restraint” or obligation.* The writer under review had better go and learn of Moses, or some other teacher, the meaning of that provision of the moral law

which reads thus : “ *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*” By giving such testimony he must ultimately lose his hold upon the confidence of the public. Earlier or later the fraud is discovered, and the unscrupulous witness is impeached who attempts to mislead the people. We fear that “ R. W.” has not the moral stamina required to enable him to tell the exact truth ; nor has he the mental illumination necessary to a clear perception of a great spiritual subject. If his “ eye were only single,” and honestly directed to the discovery of the truth of Spiritualism, his whole nature would “ be full of light.” It is the “ evil eye ” that fills the man with darkness.* If it were possible to clear his inward vision,

“ Then would be closed the restless, oblique eye,
That looks for evil, like a treacherous spy.”

After representing that thousands of keen observers visited the Fox Sisters in New York, Philadelphia, Washington and elsewhere, without being able to penetrate the mystery of the Rappings and other phenomena, he still insists, with dogmatic pertinacity, that it was all a cunning artifice to deceive the people ; and that the fraud succeeded on a scale so gigantic that it put all Munchausen story-tellers to shame. Those little girls kept their secret so well, and they managed their exhibition so skillfully, that gray-bearded philosophers were filled with amazement. The scientists were nonplused ; theologians were sure the devil was in the poor little girls ; while the astute of every name and genus were humiliated because they could not see through the trick of the “ two little peas-

* See the Sermon on the Mount, by the Nazarene.

ant girls," aged respectively twelve and fifteen years. The honest blacksmith of Hydesville could not see it by the light of his forge; and the watchful mother—herself a pious member of the Methodist Episcopal Church—never once suspected when she put the children to bed at night that she was tucking up the devil with the little girls. According to this apocryphal chronicler the little Foxes deceived the Old Folks for years, and "were too cunning for anything." Mark what the Greek Church historian of Spiritualism says:

"The probability is that the simple-minded mother and father of these girls never knew the secret of the Rappings. Margaret has said her mother died believing in Spiritualism."

Here it will be observed the writer presumes that the children were the inventors of a species of fathomless deviltry, while their parents were simple-minded and truthful people who, living and dying, were sincere in the belief that the mysterious phenomena were produced by the Spirits of another world. The reader is requested to notice how all this comports with the following statement which is extracted from the next succeeding paragraph:

"The fact remains that *two little peasant girls were made, by older and cunning persons, the instruments of this delusion and fraud.* These poor children—*under the management of crafty adults who exercised stern control over them**—were the real founders of Modern Spiritualism. . . . The whole of this monstrous superstructure . . . arose from 'that girlish trick,' at Hydesville."

Here "R. W." virtually assumes that those poor children were helpless innocents, who were forced to *rap and be tricky*

* The reviewer is responsible for the emphasis.

for a consideration, while the Old Folks, the adults of this family—simple-minded as they were just now represented—had become unprincipled knaves and entered into a league with Satan to carry on this infernal mischief. (It was especially the mother and Leah, the oldest daughter, who managed the mediums.) It is represented that the girls had at last grown weary of “the life of deception they were leading,” and were disposed to reform ; that one of them (Margaretta) “abjured . . . Spiritualism” and resolved on a life of devotion to the church ; all of which reminds me of just these two lines in the Hymn Book, which I may not quote literally :

“ Mark what a tangled web we weave,
When once we practice to deceive.”

The author of this last attempt to write down Spiritualism has not advanced above the nether extremities of the subject. It will surprise the reader to know that he still holds on to *the toe-snapping theory*, which we supposed all sane people had abandoned long ago. Indeed its author never believed his own hypothesis. It was the worthless invention of a trifler who was only qualified to burlesque a grave subject. But it answers the purpose of “ R. W.,” who in speaking of the girls says, “ It is well known . . . that they could make the same rapping noise with their toes ;” at the same time he discredits the idea that the sounds were produced in any other way. He never once mentions the fact that, in the presence of the Misses Fox, the rappings often came on the doors and walls, and even on the ceilings far above the heads of the mediums. To presume that two young ladies of modest demeanor managed to rap with their toes on the high ceilings of our hotel

parlors would stagger our faith more than anything we have observed in Spiritualism.

That the sounds did frequently occur under such conditions as I have named is confirmed by the observation of thousands. In the presence of the family we personally witnessed a more startling exhibition. At the funeral of CALVIN R. BROWN—former husband of Leah, the eldest of the Fox Sisters—the Rappings were heard on the casket containing the remains, and were so distinct as to attract the attention of an assembly that filled the parlors of a large house. While the present writer was delivering the funeral oration, the spirit took occasion to express his approval of what was said by rapping with great emphasis, and frequently, on his coffin. During this surprising performance there was not a single soul—in the body—within six feet of the casket !

The writer under review represents that the late Dr. Kane, the Arctic explorer—who was the accepted lover of Margaretta—was for unexplained reasons extremely apprehensive of some possible impending evil, and that he did not conceal his fears in writing to the girl to whom he had engaged himself. "R. W." quotes the following passage from what purports to be one of the Doctor's love letters :

"You know I am nervous about the Rappings. I believe the only thing I ever was afraid of *was this confounded thing being found out*. I would not know it myself for ten thousand dollars."

The present writer was sufficiently acquainted with Dr. Kane to know that he had too much nerve to tremble before either mortals or spirits. He was not afraid of the shades of departed men. No foul "demon of the waste" or "goblin

damned" ever shook his nerves. No! But Dr. Kane belonged to an aristocratic family, and he was an ambitious man. *What he feared was the odium that might attach to his name on account of his intimate association with a Spirit-rapping medium!* It was the apprehension of that "*confounded thing being found out.*" This involves the reason why Margaretta "abjured Spiritualism," and for a season sought refuge—from "the old fools" who pursued the Spirits through her—in the bosom of the Mother Church. For this reason she was taken away from her family and sent to school during the absence of her eminent lover while on his last expedition to the Arctic regions.

And here we may learn how a change of circumstances may modify the views and conduct of some men. When Dr. Kane returned from that expedition he went to the Astor House, and on waking the next morning the city papers informed him that he was famous. It was then that he conceived the idea that a marriage alliance with a Spirit-medium was beneath the dignity of his family and unworthy of the fame he had achieved. It was his personal ambition, superior culture, pride of name and social distinction, rather than a lack of courage, in the ordinary sense, that interrupted the engagement, and left a confiding young woman to loneliness and widowhood.

But I have already devoted more time and space to this review than the paper in *The Oriental Church Magazine* really deserves. R. W.'s claims to our attention, such as they are, do not depend on any merit in what he has published. His essay is exceedingly superficial, and reveals nothing else so

clearly as his ignorance of the whole subject. He offers no important facts in illustration of his shallow views, and he assigns no substantial reasons in support of his dogmatic affirmations. He refers to Animal Magnetism, Clairvoyance, Polarity, the Odic Force, etc. ; but we search in vain for the least evidence that he has any knowledge of these agents, faculties and forces. In his hands the terms appear to be cabalistic words with a veiled significance he has no power to comprehend. His feeble attempt to belittle a great subject has given us the intellectual caliber and moral *status* of the man. He alone will have occasion to regret the ultimate results of his futile effort to obscure the light of the Spiritual Reformation, which he can no more hide than he can extinguish the sun.

If Father Bjerring desires to correct the errors of "R. W.," and, at the same time, to enlighten the Greek Church on the subject of Spiritualism, perhaps he may allow his readers to peruse this review.

S. B. BRITTAN.

80 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, }
NEW YORK CITY. }

JOURNALISTIC IGNORANCE ILLUSTRATED.

OPPOSITION OF THE NEW YORK DAILY TIMES.

FROM THE HARTFORD (CONN.) DAILY TIMES, SEPT. 8, 1881.

Justice and Liberality of the Hartford *Times*—The Moral Courage that respects the Truth—The New York *Times*—A Striking Contrast—An Expert without Experience—Dr. Beard as a Psychological Authority—Testimony of George Ripley and Horace Greeley—Hollow pretensions of Doctors Beard and Hammond—What they Discover was long since Known to Thousands—The *Times*' Ignorance of the History of Psycho-magnetic Phenomena—Blind Faith in its solitary Witness—A Metaphysical Question—Dogmatism of the New York *Times*—Analysis and Criticism of the Editor's Views—Illustrative Examples and Explanation of Principles—Disposition of Jugglery and the Jugglers—Scolists Discounting the Claims of Eminent Scientists—Calling the wrong Witness—Testimony of Clairvoyance to the Truth of Spiritualism.

NEW YORK, August 30, 1881.

To the Editor of the Hartford Times :

YOUR metropolitan namesake quite recently published a lengthy editorial on the subject of Clairvoyance, in which the writer lampooned mediums in general and characterized Spiritualism as " a demoralizing and degrading superstition." He also paraded Dr. George M. Beard as the only credible witness to the truth of Clairvoyance as either a real or possible psychological fact in human experience, and the reality of which the Editor accepted on the personal testimony alone of the one man to whom the *Times* attributes unerring judgment and oracular authority.

The subjoined answer was prepared for and forwarded to the New York *Times*, but it was declined on the plea of in-

sufficient space in its columns. That journal always has room enough to discuss the adverse side of the spiritual question, and in so doing it often shows the extreme poverty of its information, and its utter inability to recognize either the plainest principles of reciprocal justice, or the most obvious distinctions in metaphysical philosophy.

Knowing that the morality of journalism, as practiced in your office, accords to all honorable parties equal freedom in the discussion of great public questions, I take the liberty to forward this correspondence to you for publication, and have the honor to remain,

Yours truly,

S. B. BRITTAN.

CLAIRVOYANCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

IS DR. BEARD A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERT ?

To the Editor of the New York Times :

IN your article on Clairvoyance, published in the edition of the 7th instant, you express the opinion that the "experiments recently made by Dr. George M. Beard do not appear to have attracted the attention which they deserved." A summary disposition is then made of the long line of previous experimenters, who, as you suggest, have appeared in uninterrupted succession "for the last thirty years." You observe that these have very frequently been "persons who have not, to put it mildly, commanded the confidence of thinking men." On the contrary, you are pleased to add the following erroneous statement :

“These persons have been for the most part professed fortune-tellers or traveling showmen, and when they pretended that they or their ‘subjects’ could read, when blindfolded, letters placed on their foreheads, it was not necessary to regard these pretensions seriously. The verdict of all scientific men has been that ‘Clairvoyance’ was simply an imposture.”

This disparaging estimate of the character and claims of all the earlier experimenters in this department of psychological science is exceedingly unjust, as I have the means of proving to the entire satisfaction of every candid inquirer. Some thirty years ago the public witnessed, at old Clinton Hall in this city, nightly for several consecutive weeks, such experiments as Dr. Beard has but recently repeated, and *many others of a far more extraordinary character, which he has not yet produced.* The *Tribune*, *Evening Post*, *Sun*, *Brooklyn Eagle*, and other daily and weekly journals of that period, contained frequent and lengthy descriptive notices of many startling experiments performed then and there before thousands of our most intelligent citizens, and with demonstrative proofs of their genuineness. The late George Ripley, LL.D., frequently took occasion to notice with particular favor the experiments performed by the writer, and a lengthy statement of some of those illustrations of psycho-physiological power appeared in the *Tribune* with Horace Greeley’s unqualified indorsement of their reality and importance.

At this late day Dr. Beard and Dr. Hammond come before the public, not to formulate from demonstrated facts and recognized principles a new and still more important branch of science; not to explain the laws that determine the occurrence of the facts; nor yet to present us any phenomena es-

entially new ; but merely to repeat some of the ruder and less attractive experiments, already—for more than a quarter of a century—familiar to the observation of thousands of well-informed people. Anything like “a flourish of trumpets” on this particular occasion may be regarded as in questionable taste if not out of order. True, these doctors appear to entertain the notion that by their own tardy recognition of certain well-known facts, they have placed the public under some obligation for services in the cause of science. But they have made no scientific discovery. They are most welcome to all the laurels they may have fairly won ; but, really, in this connection, *they have discovered nothing—if we except the dogmatic skepticism and ignorance which so long delayed their recognition of the truth.*

The fact is mentioned that “Dr. Beard has been known as an earnest hater of what is called Spiritualism ;” also that he has found that there is “something in Clairvoyance.” Then follows this cordial indorsement of his claims as a discoverer and demonstrator :

“He has proved by experiments that there are persons who in certain circumstances can read writing—or for that matter print—merely by bringing it in contact with the skin of the forehead. There is not the slightest reason to doubt his report. When a chemist of character and ability tells us that he has made an experiment and has obtained certain results, we accept his assertion, and the experiments made by Dr. Beard are entitled to a like reception. We may consider that it has been fully established that a young woman, whose eyes Dr. Beard had carefully bandaged, was able to read a page of writing that was laid on her forehead.”

Why is Dr. Beard regarded as *the man* who has established the fact of Clairvoyance on a scientific basis ? Why should

he be credited with the demonstration of the truth that some persons have a faculty of vision which does not depend on the sensibility of the optic nerve, or in any way on the organic instruments of sight ; and that this faculty is wholly independent of natural light and every form of artificial illumination ? If the man who, so long ago, from the standpoint of physical science, decided that no such faculty belongs to our human nature, and that the reported instances involve physiological, optical and other impossibilities, why is he just now pushed into such prominence as the first reliable witness to the truth he has so long disputed ? If years ago, and without investigation, he put forward his arbitrary assumption that clear sight, without the use of the organic instruments of vision, was and is an impossible function of human nature, what possible consequence can we attach to his more recent spasmodic conclusion to the contrary ? What superior qualifications does Dr. Beard possess that insures his cordial recognition as the only infallible witness to the truth of Clairvoyance ?

I do not press these questions because I have any disposition to be hypercritical ; but you will pardon me for suggesting, that many of your readers may infer that *Dr. Beard derives his unequalled distinction in this connection from the fact that he is the "earnest hater of what is called Spiritualism."* But must a man hate Spiritualism to be able to tell the truth about Clairvoyance ? On the contrary, he can not be a competent investigator of any phenomena of cognate character so long as his prejudice against Spiritualism amounts to hatred. Indeed, the man who hates anything in the Universe, or any phenomena which may possibly occur under the divine econ-

omy of the natural world, can never be a philosopher in any worthy sense. Moreover, in the nature of the case, such a man must make a very poor scientist.

In this department of scientific research Dr. Beard has not left his foot-prints. He has made no discovery, and he is not likely to acquire any such distinction. All that can be said is, that a great truth has at length overcome his determined opposition and gained an unwilling recognition. He is not a true lover of Nature, who, while engaged in profound studies, never loses sight of himself and the narrow aims of personal ambition. He only seeks for confirmation of a foregone conclusion, and strives to bend the facts and laws of Nature to his selfish purpose. The prejudice of such a man will always fetter his reason, color and cloud his observations, warp his judgment, and thus disfigure and obscure the truth.

The conservation of our self-love is not always compatible with truth and the highest human interests, and it is well if we are made to realize that the essential facts, in any possible case, by no means depend upon our reluctant recognition of their existence. Dr. Beard has of late been taught this wholesome lesson. In spite of his determined efforts to maintain his old position, he has been cast down from the tall pedestal of his proud unbelief and made to see "something in Clairvoyance." He does not yet see anything in Spiritualism, but he will hereafter. At present he is in the condition of that school-boy who believed in the multiplication table, but had no faith in the rule of three. The little boy had never ciphered so far, and hence it remained for him to have his faith established in the rule of arithmetical proportion. If Dr. Beard lives long,

he will have a larger experience and a riper judgment. Time will humble the scientist by rebuking his arrogant pretensions, and enable him at last to cipher out the grand problems of the Spiritual Philosophy.

The condition of mind which you ascribe to Dr. Beard, in his relation to Spiritualism, is not only abnormal, but it is one that renders him an unsuitable witness, and a questionable judge of any phenomena depending on the spiritual constitution of man. Fortunately we are not left without some light on this question and guidance to a rational conclusion. The common sense of mankind and the jurisprudence of all civilized nations have settled the question on a foundation that is not likely to be disturbed. The man who has prejudged a case, civil or criminal, can not be accepted as a juror; and should it be made to appear that a witness in a felony had a personal hatred of the prisoner at the bar, he would either not be allowed to testify, or the court would charge the jury not to convict on such evidence. Such, however, are the most conspicuous witnesses against Spiritualism, and of this class are the self-constituted judges of its claims, among whom are many eminent doctors of medicine and divinity.

You apprehend that certain important consequences will follow the labors of the latest experimenter in psychological science. Permit me to make a further reference to your article, from which I extract the following:

“There are two results which follow Dr. Beard’s experiments. One is the establishment of the fact that the mind can act upon matter without the aid of the senses. The person who reads words written on a sheet of paper, folded up and laid on the forehead, does not perceive those words with the sense of sight or that of touch.”

Pardon me if I suggest that the mind never acts on matter *through the senses*. It is the opposite of this proposition that expresses the exact truth. The mind is constantly acted upon through the organic instruments of sensation by all the elements, forms and forces of the external world. All the simple and complex sensorial impressions of which the nervous system is capable are thus produced. On more mature reflection I feel quite sure you will agree with me, that the senses and their corporeal instruments are merely *receptive*. They receive impressions and convey them to the mind as the visible images of material objects are reflected in a mirror. These are the open channels through which we derive all our information respecting the outward creation ; while *the human mind acts on the tangible substances and organic forms of the world through the will and the muscles of voluntary motion*. We may see, hear, smell, taste and touch, without changing the elements and forms which produce these impressions in any appreciable degree. On the contrary, these sensations do perpetually modify the conditions and functions of mind, and through the reflex action of its faculties, the phenomena of life and all the conditions of our moral and physical existence.

When you affirm that "the person who reads words written on a sheet of paper folded up and laid on the forehead does not perceive those words with the sense of sight," you appear to confound sight, which is a faculty of the spirit, with the organic instruments of vision, which perish with the body. This is the common mistake of all philosophers who take the materialistic view of human nature. They fail to discover the human spirit by their material instruments and methods, and

hence conclude that it has no existence. The surgeon cannot find it with his scalpel, and the chemist never sees it in his retort ; *ergo, there is no spirit.* But Clairvoyance is none the less actual sight because the subject is able to dispense with the physical instruments of vision.

You express the confident opinion that Clairvoyance "furnishes an intelligible and sufficient explanation of the so-called phenomena of Spiritualism." Will you permit me to suggest that such a conclusion can only rest on careless or otherwise insufficient observation, since undoubtedly nine-tenths of the phenomena of Spiritualism are intrinsically of such a nature as to admit of no such explanation. A vast variety of sounds are produced by the invisible powers, and it must be admitted that *sounds* do not appeal to the sense of *sight*, whether exercised through the physical organs or otherwise. For this sufficient reason we cannot refer any of the mysterious sounds to Clairvoyance. Then very heavy bodies are often moved with great force. We have orthodox authority for saying that the family Bible was repeatedly thrown by invisible hands at the venerable head of the Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., at Stratford, while the good Doctor was praying for deliverance from what he regarded as an infernal infestation. But as Clairvoyance (*clear sight*) is neither a subtile electro-chemical nor a mechanical force, it has no power to move a ponderable body; hence it follows that this passive faculty of vision, physical and spiritual, will not enable us to account for any one of the phenomena of this class. This course of reasoning could be further illustrated and enforced by the citation of a thousand examples, and by an array of witnesses from all the learned

professions, whose presence alone would silence skepticism, if they failed to convince the skeptics.

You are pleased to say that "nine-tenths of Spiritualism are trickery." On the contrary, permit me to remark that *the trickery*, whether much or little, *is no part of Spiritualism*. We might as well affirm that New York State annually produces 1,000,000 bushels of wheat, but that 900,000 bushels of the same are tares ! As, therefore, the tricks of unprincipled jugglers form no part of the phenomena of Spiritualism, I respectfully suggest that they be left out of your estimate. If the assayer should be so fortunate as to find forty pounds of the precious metals in a ton of ore, he would never think of including the 2,200 pounds of dross in his statement. Leave out the bogus mediums and also the tricks of the jugglers. When the Secretary of the Treasury figures up the amount of the national currency he never includes the counterfeits.

In the following passage you still further dignify the name and exaggerate the services of Dr. Beard as much as you dishonor the claims of each of his predecessors, and all of his contemporaries who have made a careful study of the whole subject for a much longer period than he has been before the public :

"Dr. Beard's experiments certainly give us reason to believe that he has found the clew to the mystery which is the stock in trade of spiritual mediums, and if he has really done this, he has done an immense service in overthrowing what has proved to be a demoralizing and degrading superstition. It is hoped that Dr. Beard and other scientific men will continue to investigate the field which has hitherto been abandoned to charlatans."

I shall, perhaps, be pardoned for saying that "the clew to

the mystery" was discovered some time before Dr. Beard was born, and that his life and labors have done nothing to illuminate the subject. Nor has he discovered anything else of consequence except the fact that neither the Spirits nor the laws of Nature respect the haughty presumption of mere sciolists. In presence of the real facts as they are known to thousands, his eminent services (?) disappear like the dissolving views, without leaving to the doctor's disciples so much as a grateful memory of his imaginary achievements. Moreover, Spiritualism was never "a demoralizing and degrading superstition," unless the noblest philosophy and the most vital facts of all systems of religion are to be so classified. Nevertheless, Dr. Beard is not only recognized as a scientific psychological expert, but hailed as a public benefactor; at the same time such men as Dr. Robert Hare, inventor of the oxyhydrogen blow-pipe, and Professor James J. Mapes, of this country; Crookes, of the London *Journal of Science*, Wallace, Varley, and Cox, of England, the wisest philosophers of Germany, and many others scarcely less distinguished, in every part of Continental Europe, are by implication, characterized as "charlatans!"

In conclusion, I observe that you have summoned a most important witness in this trial of Spiritualism *versus* Materialism. It is *Clairvoyance* that just now occupies the stand, and may it please the court we are ready to listen to the testimony. When a witness is summoned by the prosecution it is not the privilege of the counsel for the same to hustle him out and away from the tribunal without first giving the defense an opportunity for a proper cross-examination. Now, what has Clairvoyance to say about Spiritualism? Why, it is not at all

likely that a single man, woman or child can be found on earth, whose case affords the clearest evidence of the possession of this gift, that does not at the same time affirm—*there is a Spirit-world and a corresponding life for man ; that they see the Spirits and recognize their kindred ; witness their coming and going, and discover what they are doing ; and it is everywhere the unequivocal testimony of this witness that the clairvoyant can and does act as a familiar messenger between Spirits and mortals.* There are occasional exceptions in which the vision is limited to mundane affairs ; but the concurrent testimony of all natural seers and magnetic clairvoyants is that they see spiritual as well as material things. Now what will the “earnest haters of Spiritualism ” do with this fact ? Will the *Times* and Dr. Beard accept this testimony of Clairvoyance, or will they impeach the credibility of their own witness ?

Yours respectfully,

S. B. BRITTAN.

NEW YORK, *July*, 1881.

Dr. Brittan's reply to the editorial position of the *New York Times*, concerning Dr. Beard and his assumptions in relation to Clairvoyance as a proved reality, will be found to be as keen and effective as it is logical and courteous. The *Times*, not liking the attitude in which it found itself left by Dr. Brittan, refused to publish his reply.

Hartford Daily Times.

DECLINING THE RESPONSIBILITY.

IMMUNITY FOR OLD FALSEHOODS.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

Policy of the Newspaper Press—False Charge against Spiritualists—John A. Lansing's pious Speculation—"Devouring Widows' Houses"—Religious Fanatics with an Eye to Business—How Mrs. Upham was made a Victim—Fraud under the Cloak of Religion—Drawing the Papers in the Lord—Lunacy or Hypocrisy—*Asbury Park Journal's* Testimony—A Fair Confederate—Mary at the Ocean Grove Meetings—Parties all Members of Orthodox Churches.

Lies have many legs, and error is seldom tongue-tied.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

LET us presume that, in respect to the reparation of injuries, "better late than never" is a sound maxim in morals; but in the conduct of a public journal it seems to be obsolescent. When a lie is ten or fifteen days old, and has obtained certain currency, it is presumed to have a right of way which may not be disputed. The subjoined letter was respectfully declined for the reason that too much time had elapsed since this long-legged tarantula started on its journey. Thus, in the policy of the press, there comes a time when it is too late to right a wrong, *because it is not accounted good journalism to revive old things.* As defined by the present instance, that time is about *two weeks*, beyond which all lies that have contrived to run fast and escape detection must continue to have the freedom of the press. We acknowledge the right of the several professions to be governed by their

own laws, whether the same be wise or otherwise; and we are pleased to acknowledge that the *Tribune* has of late been very fair in its treatment of Spiritualism.

S. B. B.

SPIRITUALISM NOT RESPONSIBLE.

THE CASE OF REV. JOHN A. LANSING.

To the Editor of the Tribune :

I N a recent issue of your paper it was reported that "A Spiritualist and his confederate" had managed to swindle the widow of the late Prof. Thomàs C. Upham out of the sum of \$14,000. The persons named in this business are all represented to be Spiritualists, when the truth is, *not one of them can, with any show of propriety, be so classified.* Mrs. Upham is a well-known lady of great moral worth and religious influence ; but for years she has opposed Spiritualism with a determination that did not permit a spiritual paper to find a place in her household. And where is the evidence that either Rev. John A. Lansing or his fair confederate believed in Spiritualism ? In your report the Rev. John is said to be a Methodist, but I am informed on excellent authority that he is a *Baptist*. This is, however, quite unimportant. That he is regularly commissioned as a minister of the Christian church is not disputed ; but it does not appear from any evidence I have been able to obtain that he either called himself a Spiritualist or was willing to be so designated.

Let me remind you that the assumed identification of this

person with Spiritualists is certainly not supported by the annunciation of his own peculiar views, as the same find expression in the extract which you published from one of his letters to Mrs. Upham. To vindicate this opinion I will here introduce the extract, from which it must be sufficiently evident that he was never a Spiritualist in any sense likely to command the recognition of rational believers :

“I cannot meet with your demands to-night. The plans and arrangements were all made in God, and I can only move as he commands. Can you not follow the word of God as it came to you first? You know the word to be of God now as you did then. Follow it as you did then. The papers are all drawn in God and are at his disposal.

“Yours in Christ Jesus, the Lord God. Amen.

“J. A. LANSING.”

Now this godly gabble may not prove that the author was and is an arrant hypocrite and mercenary deceiver ; but if not, it is at least evidence that he is the victim of a religious fanaticism amounting to lunacy. In neither case is Spiritualism in any way responsible for his irrational views and apparently criminal conduct. He does not so much as recognize the possible agency of a single departed human soul in the affairs of this world. On the contrary, he attributes everything—all his own “plans and arrangements”—to the Supreme Being, not merely as the first cause, but as the proximate agent in every human action. This priestly pretender and *ex officio* minister of Christ says, “I can only move as he [the Lord] commands.” In his opinion God does everything by a direct and miraculous intervention in human affairs. He entertains the theocratic view of the divine government, and insists that his own business papers are no less God-given than the Mosaic

tablets. To use his own wild, fanatical language, *they are "all drawn in God!"*

To say that this pious mountebank is a Spiritualist is to utterly disregard his own testimony and all the evidence in the case. This man does not appear to have any views in common with one sane Spiritualist on earth. I write this after thirty-five years of uninterrupted intercourse with this people. In this long experience the undersigned has not met with one who entertained the notion that our ordinary human arrangements, volitions and movements, motives and methods of action, are all subject to the constant and direct interposition of a divine personality. Moreover, Spiritualists neither find nor look for "the word of God" in the several parts of speech; it can not be shut up in nouns, verbs and adjectives; nor have we any idea that *Deity has anything especially to do with the business of drawing legal and illegal papers for either dishonest or deluded clergymen*, who may be striving by unlawful means to possess the property of some pure-minded, unsuspecting widow of an honest and eminent Spiritualist.

The *Asbury Park Journal*, whose editor is quite likely to be well informed, says this is a case of "religious fanaticism" with a special adaptation to "business." I also learn—from a very intelligent professional gentleman acquainted with the family, that Miss Mary C. Ward is a pious maiden lady of mature years; that she received her early religious instruction in the Presbyterian church, of which her father has been an official member; that she trusts in God, believes in a personal devil, and has no faith in other Spirits; that she has been conspicuous at the Union Church meetings at Ocean Grove,

which would not have been permitted had she been known to be a Spiritualist.

The Rev. Mr. Lansing finishes his pious cant by subscribing himself, "Yours in Christ Jesus, the Lord God, Amen!" The Spiritualists who believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Supreme Deity are few and far between; but the pious individual who is characterized in your report as a swindler, is strictly orthodox in the prominence he gives to the common faith of the Church. The truth appears to be that *a lady, of spotless character and reputation, has been deprived of the estate left her by her excellent husband, who was an eminent Spiritualist, and this has been accomplished through the agency of an ordained minister of the Christian Church!*

Let us be just to the accused parties. We can neither measure the wrong that has been done, nor intelligently estimate the moral delinquency of the principal in this transaction, until the case has been fairly adjudicated. But if other people are to be held responsible for the conduct of this man, justice will be promoted by allowing the grave responsibility to rest precisely where it legitimately belongs. All attempts to dishonor the truth of Spiritualism and its just claims to the world's faith are worse than vain. The disciples of the Spiritual Philosophy are everywhere firm, always in *principia, non homines*.

In the love of Truth and Justice,

S. B. BRITTAN.

29 BROAD STREET, NEWARK, N. J., }
 Oct. 21, 1881. }

GREAT DARKNESS IN VERMONT.

AN EDITOR DEFENDS SATAN AND DEFAMES SPIRITUALISTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE "HERALD AND GLOBE," RUTLAND, VERMONT.

Spiritualists Dishonored and the Devil Defended—Important Concessions by Prof. Phelps—Great Extremity of the Theologians—The *Congregationalist* as a City of Refuge—Poisoned Arrows from a Bomb-proof Retreat—Ignorance and Supernaturalism—Exploded by a Philosophical Explanation—Angels Imprisoned and Devils Emancipated—Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—Bold Assumptions and Rotten Logic—Evidence Worthless when the Witness knows nothing—Impatience and Intolerance—Real Facts Rejected and the true Witnesses Defamed—Power of the Spirits—Counterfeits are Evidence of Something Genuine—Theory of Jugglery—Hermann and Heller—Are only feeble natures Inspired—Sick People of Biblical History—Modern Illustrations—Visit from the Author of the Raven—Experience of Death and Reception in the Spirit-World—Song of the Angel Lenore—A Spirit-Maiden's Song of Shelley—Coleridge Wakes the Chords of his Orphic Lyre.

To the Editor of the Herald and Globe :

A NUMBER of parties who do not approve of the spirit manifested in the editorial leader which appeared in your issue of the 9th instant—under the title of "Injustice to the Devil"—have forwarded copies of the paper to my address, and letters urging me to reply to your article. They seem to think the spirit that inspired your editorial has not made much progress, and really needs to be enlightened. The offensive terms employed in your characterization of Spiritualism and this unscrupulous attempt to defame a great people, numbering millions in every part of the civilized world, really place you without the pale of civil and rational controversy *on this particular subject*. For this reason your article would,

under other circumstances, have elicited no response from me; but I yield to the earnest solicitation of a number of your readers in respectfully offering the following answer for publication in your columns.

What does the title of your editorial imply? Evidently, neither more nor less than this: *That the Devil himself is dishonored in having the Spiritual Manifestations referred to his agency.* For aught we know to the contrary, your knowledge of the personage whose claims to justice and respectability you seem disposed to vindicate, may be full and comprehensive; but your article will clearly prove to the minds of all thoughtful observers, that so far as you have been informed at all upon the subject of Spiritualism, *you have been misinformed.* That you may have no cause to complain of injustice at my hands, I will not restate the substance of your views in my own language, but will now and hereafter reproduce portions of your article:

“Prof. Phelps is presumably both a learned and able man, but his article is a melancholy proof that a man may be both able and learned in a scholastic sense, and yet be a very credulous person. Prof. Phelps concedes the genuine supernatural origin of the so-called modern ‘spirit manifestations’ when he pronounces them altogether diabolical. Prof. Phelps is quoted as urging all Christians to combat it to the extent of their power, and, in order to do so, advises them to induce their congregations to have firm faith in the existence of a devil, who is the rival and enemy of God. Prof. Phelps clearly believes that God allows evil spirits to communicate, but affords no opportunities to good ones. Prof. Phelps concedes altogether too much to the modern mummery of spiritism when he accepts it as of supernatural origin.”

It is true that Prof. Austin Phelps accepts at least a portion of the essential facts of Spiritualism; it is also true that *he*

concedes the still more important fact of their spiritual origin; but you are greatly mistaken in presuming that these admissions are the result of excessive credulity. On the contrary, no more reluctant and ungracious witness was ever found on the stand in the interest of truth. His unwilling testimony is given because he can no longer resist the conviction that fastens upon every faculty of his mind. He assures us, in substance, that only at last when the hypothesis of jugglery must be forever abandoned ; when all the material theories have, one after another, exploded like so many rockets in the air ; when the spirit of popular inquiry besieges the pulpit, boldly questions the divine authority of its mission, and can no longer be resisted ; and science, alas, is dumb as a pagan idol—only in this great extremity has a half-confession of the truth been wrung from the intellect and conscience of the man. Fearing the storm that might follow the recitation of his testimony he takes shelter under the theological casemates, or the bomb-proof chambers of the *Congregationalist*, *within which no Spiritualist is ever permitted to appear*. This brave champion warns his brethren to be industrious in fulminating the necessary anathemas and in hurling their rusty and pointless javelins, not only at old Satan himself and his ancient fallen angels, but at all his new recruits, every little demon, in and out of hell, and all the modern devices of the Evil One.

From the secure retreat before mentioned Professor Phelps aims his envenomed shafts at the spiritual hosts of two worlds, who mind them about as much as a grand army in its triumphal march would heed the ephemera whose little hum lasts

for a day and is no more. This eminent teacher in the orthodox school of modern divinity—who knows more about this subject than the writer in your paper—makes his admissions *because he can not help it*; and for this he stands credited by the *Herald and Globe* with being a learned simpleton who, for lack of either reason or nerve, surrenders the citadel of the argument to the Spiritualists.

You appear to entertain the common notion that the Spiritualists, not less than Dr. Phelps, claim a supernatural origin for the modern phenomena, when, in fact, they set up no such claim. We can not remember how many times we have exploded this false assumption, in each case pursuing a different line of argument. Let us dispose of it once more, in this case reasoning from premises not before employed; and this may suffice until the next man, who knows little or nothing of Spiritualism, shall attempt to write it down.

Now be it known that *we claim a spiritual, but not a supernatural origin for these Manifestations*. Nature has several general departments or kingdoms, and these admit of many subdivisions. The mineral kingdom may be regarded as the foundation at least of so much of the cosmical superstructure of this world as comes within the field of our mortal observation. Vegetation does not belong to the mineral kingdom; but it is no less natural on that account. The realm of animated nature rises still above, but is quite as natural as the mineral and vegetable kingdoms. Man, the last and crowning work of the Love and Wisdom which conceive and fashion all, is every way as natural as any of the inferior developments of the physical world. *Cosmos* comprehends the vast temple of

universal being from the foundation in subterranean darkness to the illuminated dome where the human mind, clothed with the majesty of divinity, occupies its throne "but a little lower than the angels."

And here I must especially emphasize this fact, namely, *the human mind, not less than the body, is a part of the Divine natural economy of universal being. Mind being a component part of Nature, it follows that its faculties, affections and functions are absolutely natural.* The power of mental impregnation and the generation of thought ; the ability to clothe ideas with appropriate forms of expression, whether by the use of articulate sounds, written characters, or the more primitive language of a universal symbolism, are always and everywhere but natural faculties and functions of human intelligence.

Nor are these powers any less natural when the mind leaves the corporeal frame, and enters on its higher and more complete existence in the Spirit-world. The butterfly that spreads its iridescent wings in the clear morning air, and sparkles in the sunshine, is "a thing of beauty," but not less natural than the poor grub that but yesterday crawled in the dust. As the normal exercise of the mental and moral faculties of man, in any and every sphere of his existence, must be altogether natural, it follows of necessity that such manifestations of intelligence from departed souls can never be *super-natural* in the sense implied in your article, and virtually accepted by Prof. Phelps. It is only necessary to open the eyes of the understanding to a perception of *the spiritual side of man and the natural world*, and the narrow walls that limit our recognition of Nature to the mere objects of sensuous observation will

suddenly melt and vanish like dissolving views in the clear light of the Spiritual Morning.

You very properly point out the fundamental absurdity in the position of Prof. Phelps, in his assumption that "God allows evil spirits to communicate, but affords no opportunities to good ones." This must even shock the reverence of the heathen, and all our Christian infidels who care to preserve a decent seeming. In the homiletics of orthodox pulpits we are often lectured on irreverence and the sin of blasphemy, one form of which it is said can never be forgiven, here or elsewhere, now or hereafter. But will some one be kind enough to define the particular form of blasphemy that is more shocking and shameless than the peculiar phase that bears the sign-manual of Prof. Phelps and the indorsement of the Andover school of popular divinity? They represent that the All-wise and loving Father transports all the pure spirits and holy angels (messengers) to some far-away heaven, where their freedom is so restrained that they are not permitted to go out on errands of mercy; that we poor mortals are so far beneath and beyond the utmost reach of their loving sympathies that no one of them may ever come to us, even in the seasons of our greatest peril.

And then it is further maintained that the Supreme Being—this wise and merciful Father of all souls—has permitted a great upheaval in the infernal regions, and allowed Satan, the chief sheriff of the under world, to make a general jail-delivery of the prisoners in hell! If we may credit these religious teachers, the armies of Satan are thus mercilessly let loose upon the God-forsaken inhabitants of this poor world, to the

end that we may be cruelly deceived by their subtle sophistries, blinded and stupefied by their diabolical arts, and so fatally led astray as to render our everlasting damnation sure ! (It may be pertinent to inquire if such religious literature is fit to be circulated in the mails ?) Oh, if this is not “ the unpardonable sin,” so long preached at us with such terrible vehemence—*the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of the divine Love and Wisdom*—surely, the grim multitude of vulgar blasphemers ; all men who profane sacred things, and the hoary infidels who commit sacrilege in the temples of Liberty and Religion, may take courage ; even while sharp detectives are looking among sinners outside of the Church for one suitable illustration of the subject.

Here is another specimen of your dogmatism which claims a passing notice in this connection. It is in your own words, and it ought to be apparent to every mind that has any basis in the first principles of a scientific philosophy, that it can neither be reconciled with reason nor the facts :

“ Everybody knows more than anybody, as Lincoln said—and the vast mass of intelligent human testimony is overwhelmingly against the truth of the proposition that spirits, evil or good, have ever returned to this earth and held any sort of communication with mortals.”

Allow me to say that your position is unsound, and your statement can not be defended upon any recognized principles of logical reasoning. It is an easy task to expose the shallow sophistry that lurks under the specious covering of your words. We never accept as a witness—however willing he may be to testify—*the man who knows nothing of the case that is on trial.* Should a number of men who never met JAMES A. GARFIELD,

and were never in Washington, go there this week and insist on giving testimony to the facts in the great case now before the criminal court in that City, they would be instantly admonished to go about their business. If they were persistent in demanding recognition, they would be lodged in prison for contempt, or sent to the nearest lunatic asylum. Before we can accept any man as a witness, for or against our cause, *he must know something about it.* Only the enemies of Spiritualism are crazy enough to give positive testimony without being qualified by the smallest knowledge of the subject. I intend no special or personal application of my words when I say, in general terms, that upon the hollow claims of all conceited pretenders to knowledge we may write the significant word which the grand juries used to indorse on the forms of indictment when the evidence was insufficient to warrant the finding of a true bill. That single expressive word was—*ignoramus.* On this subject as truly as on every question of language, science, art, political economy and jurisprudence, those who really know nothing can surely have nothing to say worthy of public attention.

Taking my stand on the self-evident proposition that those who are utterly destitute of a knowledge of Spiritualism can have nothing to communicate to others, I rule out the great multitude who, having no experience of their own, have never investigated this subject. Of the millions, who through all the historic ages, have had some views, more or less clearly defined, of spiritual things, it will be found, on careful inquiry, that the preponderance of evidence is altogether in our favor. The question, "What is truth?" is not likely to be finally

settled by a popular vote, at least in our day; but there can be no doubt that, among all those who have possessed some knowledge of the subject, an immense majority have believed that Spirits, high and low, of many degrees of intellectual culture and moral development, have visited the earth and, in one way or another, revealed their presence to the senses and the souls of men.

You talk at random about the impostures and exposures of "the most famous mediums;" of their "arbitrary conditions of darkness," and gravely suggest the necessity for "*weighing the evidence*," which, by the way, you never do. On the contrary, you boldly dispute the possible existence of any real facts; you libel the mediums, many of whom are pious old souls who daily pray for divine guidance; not a few are fair ladies of blameless lives; and many more are young (some are in the cradle), innocent and spotless as the sweet messengers of morning whose footprints scintillate upon the mountains. You show that Pope was right in saying:

"Some wicked wits have libeled all the fair."

Are you not one of the objects of the poet's impeachment, since you question the integrity of all the witnesses, and publicly denounce the whole subject as false and devilish "in the sense that all deceit is diabolical?" You go on with the unqualified expression of your earnest and immeasurable contempt, in your own peculiar style, as will appear from the subjoined extract, and are duly credited with that supreme fidelity which sacrifices nothing of conviction to the amenities of polite discussion:

“Of course these exposures are of no effect upon those deluded and illogical beings who are willing to accept the astounding assumption of Spirit manifestations on evidence too cheap and threadbare to hang a dog with a half-witted jury ; but such exposures and the absurd system of checks and conditions which enable any mediocre mountebank to perform miracles, ought to carry weight enough with an able man of large learning, like Prof. Phelps, and save him from so stupid a concession to Spirit manifestations.”

And this is the way you dispose of evidence. You make no attempt to analyze the phenomena. Instead of looking at the facts in a candid and dispassionate manner, you shut up your eyes and give vent to your impatience and intolerance. You stop your ears when the witnesses speak, and all the while keep on piping the same old story of fraud, jugglery and delusion. The attempt to mislead the people, by assuring them that Spiritualists rest the claims of the whole subject on “evidence too cheap and threadbare to hang a dog with a half-witted jury,” will not succeed, either in or out of Rutland, for the obvious reason that the public is too well informed to accept your statement. You make haste to deny the power of human Spirits to come to this world, when there is no evidence to prove that they ever went away. As you have raised the question of the capacity of the immortals to travel, a gifted Spirit shall answer you from the other world in the following suggestive lines :

‘ This is the power immortal Spirits have
 In their serene pavilion of delight :
 The wingèd mind outstrips the laggard sun ;
 The heart flies swift as lightning from a star ;
 Attraction is the soul’s impelling force ;
 Desire, the charioteer of Destiny.”

The evidence in the case seems to establish the fact that

the lives or all human spirits begin on the earth, and as there is no evidence to show that they necessarily go away when they leave their mortal bodies, the logical presumption is that they are still here, or may be at pleasure. The fact that we cannot see them proves nothing to the point. There are many forms of attenuated matter, or sublimated substance, which escape the observation of the man whose powers of perception are limited to the capacity of the physical organs of sensation. We can not even see the air we breathe, but we never doubt its existence. But if it may be supposed that the Spirits are here, you still, somewhat arrogantly, dispute their capacity to give any intelligent communication, or to otherwise make a revelation of their presence. It is evident that Justice never held the scales in which you are accustomed to weigh the evidences of Spiritualism. Will you not be persuaded, my dear Sir, to stop dogmatizing from the know-nothing standpoint, give your attention to the witnesses, and respectfully weigh their testimony? Here again you reason blindly as usual :

“It is no answer that thousands of worthy people believe in the ‘manifestations,’ for thousands of worthy people are full of delusions that science scouts and philosophy derides. Thousands of worthy people have been imposed upon by counterfeit notes, have accepted forgeries as genuine signatures, and thousands of worthy people would be very dangerous persons to place on the judge’s bench to try any case that demanded sound, discriminating judgment, the capacity to sift and weigh evidence.”

Weighed in your own balance you are found wanting. So far you have neither exhibited a “sound, discriminating judgment” in this case, nor “the capacity to sift and weigh evidence.” Indeed, you have shown no disposition to perform these functions of a rational mind, and hence you must be an

unsafe judge in such matters. But when you thus speak of "counterfeit notes" you imply the existence of genuine notes. Without the true ones the counterfeits could have no possible existence. And then it seems to have escaped your observation that there can be no "forgeries" unless there are some "genuine signatures." Now will you be kind enough to justify your extraordinary use of terms *by either admitting the reality of the Spiritual Phenomena, or otherwise by showing that we can counterfeit things which have no objective existence?* Here follows a conundrum and your answer to the same :

"Now what is the difference between Hermann or Heller's miracles and the miracles of Modern Spiritism? The difference is, first, that Hermann's 'miracles' are self-confessed tricks which, nevertheless, completely impose on the senses and defy popular explanation; they are beautifully executed, are diverting, and are wrought in daylight, leaving to the audience the full exercise of their sight. The 'miracles' of Spiritism are very clumsy, cheap tricks, wrought in the darkness, or else wrought under . . . conditions of investigation that are a tacit confession of deceit."

Neither Hermann, Heller, nor the Spiritualists ever professed to perform *miracles*; nor is it in evidence that they have hitherto or do now believe in the possible exercise of any such power. You are, therefore, merely improvising a man of straw, and surely no one will question your right to knock him down just as often as you may be pleased to set him up. The writer was not acquainted with Hermann, but Heller was familiarly known by many Spiritualists. In not a few of his more extraordinary experiments Heller was supposed to have the aid of clairvoyance and the coöperation of invisible beings. He was generally reported to be a believer in at least a portion of the facts of Spiritualism. It is, moreover, on record

that some of the most celebrated jugglers in Europe have admitted that certain spiritual phenomena are quite beyond the utmost power of their art. Now to presume that the facts and experiences which are pulverizing the very bones of the old Materialism, and have already convinced millions of people in America, in all European countries, and everywhere throughout the civilized world, are merely juggling tricks, is to madly jump at a conclusion a thousand-fold more incredible than the spiritual theory and philosophy of the Manifestations.

“And to these cheap mummeries and onion-tainted eructations of ungrammatical frauds Prof. Phelps seriously applies the name of diabolic supernaturalism. The grammar is supernatural, the spelling diabolic, but all else is either the careful imposture of cunning cheats, or the abnormal pranks and utterances of persons who sincerely think themselves inspired when they are only hysterical. Healthy men and women of sound minds in sound bodies never see any spirits, never become inspirational speakers, singers or preachers: morbidly nervous men and hysterical women can always see anything they desire, from a tomcat to a camelopard, and can spout sentimental nonsense by the hour,” etc.

Here Spiritualism—this world’s highest conception of the philosophy of Nature and the religion of Humanity—is treated as a *farcical show!* The writer can see nothing whatever in the truth that has convinced millions but a mere exhibition of buffoonery. The first sentence of the foregoing extract is in a style which throws the “Sacred Rhetoric” of Andover into the shade. “*Cheap mummeries and onion-tainted eructations of ungrammatical frauds,*” is such an illustration of rhetorical elegance and powerful characterization of an offending party as seldom comes to our notice in the literature we are accustomed to read. In this case you are not only your own witness in supporting your charges, but prosecuting attorney and supreme

judge. After giving your own testimony and ruling out all the witnesses for the defense, you render judgment with the authority that admits of no revision or appeal. You decide that *all inspired persons, and such as see Spirits, are "morbidly nervous men and hysterical women."* We do not care to demur, but would thank you to answer a few questions for the satisfaction of the pious Christian people of New England.

Was Elisha, the Hebrew prophet, suffering from nervous debility when he beheld the spiritual hosts encamped about Israel? Daniel, who was "cast into the lion's den," seemed at one time to have been a man of considerable nerve. Did Daniel "weaken" at last, and was his nervous system relaxed and his mind in a morbid state when he saw and interpreted the hand-writing of a Spirit on the wall of the king's palace? Did Ezekiel have a night-cap on his head, or *in his stomach*, when he had the vision of *dry bones*? Did Peter have *cerebro-spinal meningitis* on the house-top when the "great sheet" was let down containing all manner of four-footed beasts ("tom-cat" and "camelopard" not specified)? According to this theory, Saul had an attack of *epilepsia*, or falling sickness, when, according to the Evangelical narrative, he was knocked down by a Spirit and was sure he heard a mysterious voice speaking to him in Hebrew. John must have suffered from a succession of nervous spasms, accompanied by great prostration, while the grand visions of the Apocalypse were passing before him in the little island of Patmos! Did Jesus have a brain fever, or only some temporary derangement of the optic nerve, when he saw Moses and Elias? Your hypothesis presumes that those ancient worthies, and all inspired souls in

every age, have been *sick people!* On the other hand, we are left to infer that the only really normal men and women in the world are those who are spiritually blind as bats, on whose low plane of life they only

“Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave.”

Now let a Spirit refute—it may be for the one thousandth time—the stereotyped declaration that everything which comes from the other world, that is inspired, is “spiritual fustian,” “mere twaddle,” “senseless verbiage,” or, to use your own terms, “*sentimental nonsense.*” From among the distinguished authors who have made communications to the present writer, since they left the mundane sphere of existence, I will here introduce EDGAR A. POE. On occasion of the annual Thanksgiving in 1854—it was a dark, bleak November day—he came to me and related his experience while passing through the change called death, and his entrance into the other world. His thrilling story was told in *sixty-two lines*, and the improvisation occupied just *fifteen minutes*, T. L. Harris being the medium. The abrupt termination of Mr. Poe’s mortal life, the birth of the Spirit surrounded by unearthly terrors, and the opening of the spiritual avenues of sensation amidst the glories of the immortal world, are thus graphically and beautifully described in the first part of the Poem :

“A lurid mantle wrapped my Spirit-form,
Cradled in lightnings and in whirlwinds born,
Torn from the body, terribly downcast,
Plunged headlong through red furnaces in blast ;
Those seething torrents maddened me ; I fell—
But woke in Paradise instead of Hell.

Like song-waves circling in a golden bell,
 Like fragrant odors in a woodbine dell,
 Like glowing pistils in a rose unblown,
 Like all sweet dreams to Saints in slumber shown,
 Like Heaven itself, like joy incarnate given ;
 And as a ship through wintry whirlwinds driven
 Finds land-locked port in Araby the blest,
 So I, through terror, entered into rest."

A lovely maiden, whose angelic beauty is revealed in the transcendant light that emanates "from her full bosom," then comes to the poet, who is filled with rapture while she sings :

" ' I have waited, I have waited,
 As the Evening Star belated,
 When it lingers pale and lonely by the purple sunset door ;
 I have found thee, I have found thee,
 And with heart-spells fast have bound thee : '
 So from out the glowing halo sang the Angel-Maid Lenore."

The Poet then rehearses, with remarkable power of expression, the unhappy scenes of his mortal life—the poverty, desolation, despair and madness—

" All Earth's undivided sorrow,"

which so deeply wounded his sensitive heart and veiled his troubled spirit in the darkness of a tempestuous night. The feeling of absolute desperation which possessed his soul, and burned in his brain like an unquenchable fire, and the blissful repose of the liberated Spirit in the home of the angels, are vividly contrasted in the closing stanzas :

" And I fled Life's outer portal,
 Deeming anguish was immortal,
 Crying, ' Launch thy heavy thunders, tell me never to adore !
 Hate for hate and curse for curses,
 Through abysmal universes,
 Plunge me down as lost Archangels fell despairingly of yore.'

" So the whirlwind bore my Spirit,
 But to lands that Saints inherit,
 And it seems my heart forever like a ruby cup runs o'er.
 I am blest beyond all blessing,
 And an angel's pure caressing
 Flows around my soul forever like a stream around its shore."

The coming of the Spirit was not anticipated at the time. He came suddenly, and the medium was entranced in an instant. During the delivery of the poem from which the extracts are taken, the manner of the speaker was highly dramatic ; at the same time the countenance and his intonations were expressive of all the tender and terrible emotions so impressively indicated in this remarkable improvisation. The internal evidence that it was inspired by the author of the "Raven" is so strong that no unprejudiced mind, at all familiar with the circumstances of its production and the style of the reputed author, will be likely to question its claims. The late Mr. Samuel Bowles, editor of the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*, who formerly manifested an inveterate hostility to Spiritualism, published a commendatory notice of this poem, in which—in spite of his prejudices—he thus expressed his judgment of its merits : "*It has all the 'fine frenzy' of that wild son of genius, and some of the stanzas are quite equal, in our view, to his best efforts.*"

Percy Bysshe Shelley descends to the mortal sphere, out of "The Morning Land" of unfading beauty and harmonic life, to sing for us this Fairy's "Song of the Violet : "

" There came a fairy blue, and sang :
 O, maiden dear, attend, attend !
 When first on earth the violet sprang,
 Each earthly maid had fairy friend,

“ Who whispered in her ear by night,—
 Sing, heart, my heart the mellow lay ;
 And so the violet grew more bright
 Within her eyes from day to day.

“ Wake, fairies, wake from field and glen ;
 Wake, fairies, on your azure steep ;
 For ye shall throng to earth again,
 And sing to maidens in their sleep.”

On another occasion a Spirit-maiden came to sing her sweet song in honor of the immortal Shelley, from which I extract the following lines :

“ Our darling is not dead ; he lieth here,
 Where the blind, groping earth-worm finds him not.
 As water-lilies mourn the fading year,
 Fond hearts deplore him on the earth. No spot,
 Defiles the crystal pureness of his fame.
 The efflorescence of his being blooms
 On Earth, blooms splendidly. Like May he came,
 Sowing rich beauty over dens and tombs
 And rocky peaks and solitudes. He sped
 Like a clear streamlet o'er its jagged bed,
 That by no torture can be hushed asleep,
 But pours in music hastening to the deep.
 Peace, peace, bewail him not with garlands sere,
 Ye Autumn Months, his is no funeral bier,
 No pale dissolving *Eidolon* is he
 Of that which was, but never more shall be ;
 Shelley, the Spirit, lives eternally.”

I will ask space for one additional illustration from the records of modern inspired thought—only a single stanza. In this instance it is Coleridge who lifts his Orphic Lyre under the very shadow of the Cherubim, and thus discourses—in the “Lyric of the Golden Age”—of the true Church in Man :

“ The Minster is a marble psalm,
 Where Druid oak and Syrian palm
 Lift the groined roof, and seem to wave
 O'er isle and chancel, crypt and grave.
 The Church of God in Man below
 Methinks should like the Minster grow ;
 All truths His three-fold voice inspires,
 Should build its buttresses and spires ;
 Each holy deed that memory sings,
 Should gleam with cherub face and wings
 O'er the high altar's mystic shrine,
 And Love make all the place divine.”

Now, Mr. Editor, you and your readers are at liberty to judge of the merits of the examples here furnished in elucidation of my subject. How far the individual characteristics of the reputed authors are made manifest in the style of each, is left to the decision of competent judges everywhere. For a suitable consideration I might supply perhaps thirty to fifty thousand lines of poetry from Spirits, as far above the standard of ordinary newspaper verse as electric lights are superior to glow-worms and fire-flies. I am quite serious in saying this, though it is not my purpose to advertise for a contract.

I venture to look for the early publication of this letter. I am all the more confident in this expectation since you have already entered a formal protest against even “ Injustice to the Devil.” Can you not afford to be equally fair in your treatment of Spiritualists ? If in this case you decide to be no less magnanimous, I am sure you will be forgiven by the great People whom you have treated with unmerited indignity.

Yours respectfully,

S. B. BRITTAN.

SECULAR PRESS BUREAU, 29 BROAD ST., }
 NEWARK, N. J., Nov. 24, 1881. }

LATEST BIGELOW MANIFESTO.

SHADOWS ON THE GREEN MOUNTAINS.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, BOSTON, MASS.

One-sided Freedom of Discussion—A practical Commentary on Justice—Will Hindostan send a Missionary to Rutland?—Editor Bigelow's *ex parte* Controversy—He Rejects our Reply and writes a Letter—He gives Illustrations in Rhetoric—Taking his Cue from Professor Phelps—Senses and their Functions—Thomas L. Harris and the English Bards—Distinguished Converts to Spiritualism—Bigelow on Nervous Exaltation—Shakespeare and Milton—Spirits in Hamlet and Macbeth—"Midsummer Night's Dream"—Bard of Avon on Spirits and Angels—Milton's Spiritual Drama—Michael and Gabriel—Obfuscation in the Sanctum—An Editor's habitual Craze—Fraud and Delusion the Materialist's *Credenda*—Editorial Gasconade—Appeal to the passions of the Populace—Midnight views of Journalistic Responsibility—Retiring under a Cloud.

To the Editor of the Herald and Globe :

THE foregoing review of an editorial article which appeared in the Rutland *Herald and Globe* was forwarded to that journal for publication. The affectation of such a love of justice on the part of the Editor as would even "give the devil his due," furnished some justification for the inference that he might possibly be manly enough to grant a hearing to the people whom he had so unjustly assailed. But the man who deliberately misrepresents the views, aims and purposes of others, and does not hesitate to defame the character of millions of respectable people, rarely has the magnanimity to listen to either witnesses or counsel in their defense. The ignoble instinct of fear, so common among all such people, prompts them to shun a fair trial, and to hide their offenses

by any shallow device, while they flee from a righteous retribution. Instead of publishing our just and temperate review, Mr. Bigelow returned the manuscript with the following letter :

DR. S. B. BRITTAN :

1. Your letter reached me this morning. I prefer to accept your courteous description of me, as a writer, whose unscrupulous and defamatory language has fairly placed me outside of any decent field of controversy. [This is a perversion. Our words were, without the pale of civil and rational controversy *on this particular subject.*] Free discussion has its limitations, and under its name and sign I shall not meekly present my body as a target for the rotten eggs of your rhetoric. Your communication belongs to the *Banner of Light*, or some other paper equally redolent of that intellectual hysteria called Modern Spiritualism.

2. Of your ability, of your sincerity, of your literary culture, I am thoroughly persuaded, as thoroughly as I am of your impertinence in asking me to publish a personal libel on myself and my motives under the name of free discussion. Under no circumstances would I do this, save one, viz., if you could not obtain a much wider and more effective field for your opinions in your own spiritistic press. Dr. Brittan can always get a hearing, for I know very well who you are, and am familiar with your excellent literary quality ; but that fact does not blind me to the fact of your delusion any more than the genius of Wendell Phillips for oratory and literary art blinds me to his crazy theory of finance. Because you are in all lines probably my intellectual superior, is no assurance that you may not be the subject of delusion in some directions.

3. I remember you many years ago, when you lectured in Burlington, Vt. My father was deeply interested in the so-called philosophy and phenomena of Spiritualism, and I went with him to hear you, and if my memory is not at fault you were a very welcome guest at his table. You impressed me then as the only man of real ability and culture that I ever heard speak on the subject. My father, who had all his life been a "Theodore Parker" infidel, as he was termed in those days, was a man of bold, fearless, independent spirit, ready to investigate, ready to give any cause a fair hearing. I trust that his son has too much respect for his memory to judge Spiritism without a fair inquiry into the facts. My father continued his investigations for twelve years. His house was always open to the spirit lecturers and mediums ; in his frequent visits to Boston and

New York he always attended the séances of the most famous mediums. I necessarily was with him much of the time ; I have patiently sat for hours with him at circles ; have listened to all kinds of mediums, some famous, others obscure ; I was the confidant of all my father's experiences and of his conclusions. During the first years of his inquiry I think he was a believer ; but further investigation firmly convinced him that the whole thing was a delusion, mixed with a good deal of imposture. That is, he utterly rejected all performances that depended on conditions which denied the exercise of the test senses of sight and touch.

4. He saw no proof of spirit-life in the remarkable utterances of Mr. Thomas L. Harris, whose epic of " The Starry Heaven " I found among his books. He saw what I see, that Mr. Thomas L. Harris is a true poet, but he did not see that his melodious utterances were any proof of spirit-communication. He did not impugn the sincerity nor the ability of Dr. Brittan or Judge Edmonds, who came to different conclusions than he reached himself ; but he felt that he could no more accept them as perfect guides than he could follow Webster submissively in politics, because of his towering intellect, which instructed him that it was right to remand fugitive slaves to bondage. My father died, after all his candid and courageous investigation, in the belief that Modern Spiritualism had added nothing to the proofs of a conscious spirit-life, which he had always doubted from boyhood. He did not believe in Hebrew inspiration, in the divinity of Christ, or in the so-called miracles of the Bible ; he deemed them a mixture of honest delusion and clever imposture, and considered them neither better nor worse than the so-called inexplicable wonders of Modern Spiritism.

5. My own experience, since his death in 1867, has brought me to the same conclusion, that Spiritism, whether within the Bible or out of it, will not bear intelligent investigation that does not approach its task crippled by natural credulity, or paralyzed by that prepossession which starts with belief and advances to investigation, instead of starting with skepticism and reaching belief through inquiry. The number of believers in Modern Spiritism is no more proof of its truth than the number of believers in the Spiritism of the Scriptures is proof of its genuine character. I reject both as having no foundation of fact that will bear the examination of reason. The *Ledger* is a very cheap paper, but its subscribers are a multitude. The so-called phenomena are only mysterious when wrought under conditions that are *prima facie* evidence of fraud ; all else is the cheapest sort of jugglery or nervous exaltation.

6. I do think that all these inspired "visions" and "wonders,"

whether of Hebrew history or our own, have exactly the same origin ; that Harris differs from Ezekiel and the rest of them only as one devotional poet may differ *in degree* from another. Show me a poet or writer of the nervous exaltation sort, and I will show you a *sick* man, sick in mind or body. Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Danté, Massey, De Quincey, Poe, all men of genius, but a lack of robust physical and mental health showing itself in their morbidity. If we look for health in literature, we find it in Shakespeare, in Burns, in Milton, Bacon, Emerson, Montaigne, Goethe ; defective some of them in personal morals, but free from a certain morbid twist that runs through the men of genius who rise to the mood of that nervous exaltation which is the sign of an unhealthy physical organization.

7. But I must stop here ; you are easily my superior in rhetoric, in learning and literary ability, but I can not see any justification for your faith in the alleged facts upon which it rests. With these facts I have been familiar all my life ; they seem to me as inconclusive and absurd a foundation as that upon which rests the belief in the so-called miracles of the Scriptures. The belief in either ought to be confined to the feather-headed Irish peasant that fills every bog with fairies, and every bush with a bugaboo ; it belongs to the ignorant negro, who believes that every swamp is full of phantoms ; it deserves no place *on the evidence* in the belief of men of thought and discrimination. I neither affirm nor deny Spiritualism ; that as a mere speculative belief I do not deride or deny, for it may be true, but modern Spiritism I do deride and deny on the alleged facts, which do not to my mind constitute decent proof of an extraordinary conclusion. I think belief in the so-called "miracles" of the Bible has done harm, and I think belief in "the modern miracles" does little good and much harm. It simply exchanges one stupid superstition for another, and the world gains nothing by the exchange.

8. I do not publish your letter, because it has no proper place in a paper of the sort I publish. I do not feel under any obligation to print a long screed in reply to my own opinions on every subject ; if I did I should be obliged to print nothing else. Every Democrat who found his party faith assaulted would be forwarding me two or three columns, and no small country paper could afford to publish a long, elaborate reply like yours in justice to its subscribers. The publication would not harm me nor help you, for the reason that we have both looked at the same set of facts with equally honest eyes, and have reached equally honest, but different conclusions ; but as a *purely business* matter no little country paper can publish a reply of such length as yours. Such a discussion is useless, and diverting to

nobody, save those who think as little of my conclusions as I do of theirs. I comment on matters of current interest in my own way, but I cannot of course make my paper a vehicle of mere warring opinions. Spiritists must defend their faith in their own journals just as Democrats are obliged to do. If I say anything of Dr. Brittan personally that is false I will do him justice, but I owe Dr. Brittan's faith a defense no more than I owe Mormonism if I denounce it.

L. BIGELOW.

RUTLAND, VT., Dec. 1, 1881.

9. P. S.—I used the word supernatural in its well understood popular meaning ; quibbling on this point is only chopping straw under the name of logic. L. B.

1. After a gross perversion of the language we employed in the introductory paragraph of our review (as will appear from the explanation in brackets in the first paragraph of Mr. Bigelow's letter) he makes haste to admonish us that "free discussion has its limitations." We apprehended as much, and now think we have discovered the limits up in Vermont. On this point our correspondent's views are very clearly illustrated by his acts. His idea of the free discussion of Spiritualism is that he shall have full liberty to say just what he pleases—to misrepresent the whole subject and defame its disciples, never excepting the most worthy—and the right to put a gag in the mouth of any and every one who may attempt to answer him before the same audience. This is "free discussion" with the dogmatic vengeance that recognizes no rights of Spiritualists which he is bound to respect. After this amazing effluence of illogical stuff we are not at all surprised that he characterizes Spiritualism as "intellectual hysteria," and compares our rhetoric to "rotten eggs!" Elsewhere he professes to discover our "superior rhetoric, learning and literary ability ;" but he

nowhere offers any atonement for the glaring inconsistency of his statements. Now we may respectfully suggest to Mr. Bigelow that the writer who indulges in the above unseemly comparison and—referring to Spiritualists—talks about “Onion-tainted eructations of ungrammatical frauds,” is probably the only party in the present controversy who, in his boldest rhetorical flights, is likely to leave a bad aroma behind. Professor Phelps, we may suppose, knows some things, since he has

“ Worn
Gowns in the university, tossed logic,
Sucked philosophy,”

and is somewhat wiser grown, at least in the world’s estimation. Mr. Bigelow took his cue from the Professor—from the man who, after showing to his own satisfaction that the modern phenomena are all of the devil, made a *strongly aromatic* comparison in the declaration that Spiritualism is a “*putrescent heap* ;” in other words, Satan’s huge pile of infernal compost. The Editor of the *Herald and Globe* may have made creditable progress in the sacred rhetoric of Andover, but we are convinced that this is not his stronghold. If he could be persuaded to drop his windy tropes and descend to the simple language of common sense, he would be more generally understood and appreciated.

2. “Impertinence” may mean either want of adaptation to the time, place, circumstances or occasion ; personal incivility or rudeness of deportment before other persons, chiefly in presence of one’s equals or superiors. In neither of these senses can our review be regarded as an “impertinence.” It certainly aims with sufficient directness to the point, and it does

not contain a single sentence that is uncivil, either in the letter or the spirit. To intimate that there is anything libelous in our language shows the need of the schoolmaster in Rutland and of Webster's unabridged in the Editor's sanctum.

3. That the father of our correspondent honestly investigated the Spiritual Phenomena we can readily believe ; nor is it incredible that he may have arrived at a conclusion adverse to its claims. That the son honors the memory and imitates the example of his father rather appears from his own declaration than from his flippant manner of treating a grave question, his too impetuous judgment and sweeping denunciation of the whole subject. But if the elder Bigelow "utterly rejected" all the facts except such as may be perceived by "the exercise of the test senses of sight and touch," he certainly made a grave mistake. By these senses one could never distinguish the perfume of roses and violets from the fetid emanations of skunks, stramonium and asafoetida. Moreover, a large class of the spiritual phenomena consists of a great variety of *sounds* which, we know, are not cognizable by *sight* and *touch*.

4. Mr. Bigelow, following the judgment of his father, "sees that MR. THOMAS L. HARRIS is a true poet, but he does not see that his melodious utterances are any proof of "Spirit-communication." The fact he states is his misfortune. It is not given to all men to see everything. Some people are color-blind ; others can no more discern a moral principle or a metaphysical distinction than an ordinary blind man can see a hole in a wall ; and we know that the vision of the great multitude is sealed for the present to all spiritual realities.

But our correspondent does not account for the wonderful

improvisations referred to when he says that Mr. Harris is a true poet. No one could have enjoyed better opportunities for observation of the personal characteristics of the man and the peculiarities of his inspiration than the present writer had for a period of several years. Mr. Harris has not only a small brain, but his head is especially narrow through the region where the phrenologists locate ideality and sublimity, the two faculties most marvelously displayed in his poems. Upon the supposition that he is himself the sole author of the ideal creations that bear his name, his case is forever irreconcilable with the claims of phrenology, and it is a problem that admits of no satisfactory solution on the principles of psychophysiological science. The fact that any one of the leading English Bards was able to write in his own peculiar style, at the expense of much painstaking effort, was sufficient to establish for him a lasting reputation among men. But in Mr. Harris *Spiritualism has furnished the man who is entranced or goes to sleep, and without conscious effort reproduces the individual mental characteristics, with the personal and poetic idiosyncrasies of more than half a dozen of the greatest modern poets!* To maintain that Mr. Harris, or any other man, can produce such astonishing results—can rise so far above himself and without apparent effort—by a process of unconscious cerebration, is as preposterous as to assume that he can lift himself up to the seventh heaven by gently pulling at his shirt-collar.

5. You assume that the believers in Spiritualism were and are all weak and credulous people, whose minds were first “paralyzed by that prepossession which starts with belief and advances to investigation.” Here you imagine you perceive a

state of things which really has no existence in fact. No feverish dreamer under the influence of a strong narcotic, or the delirious spell of nitrous oxide gas, was ever further away from sober reason and the facts. Every one who has any reliable information on this subject knows that Spiritualism has made its way against the scientific materialism of the schools, the dogmatic theology of the Church, and almost universal unbelief. An immense majority of the investigators were determined in the beginning to explode its claims, but they did not succeed. A multitude of the saints concealed their convictions ; fashionable people amused themselves with the new illustrations of the soul's immortality ; pious ministers, like Dr. Eliakim Phelps, prayed for deliverance, while the Spirits fastened conviction on the mind and heart. Among the unwilling converts have been many sharp-sighted scientists like Dr. Robert Hare, Prof. J. J. Mapes and Prof. David A. Wells, of this country ; Crookes, Wallace, Varley and Cox, of England, and the scientific philosophers of Germany. It was the original purpose of these men, and of many others scarcely less distinguished, to expose the deception they expected to discover. They kept firmly to their resolution until the demonstrations of Spiritual presence, intelligence and power became so numerous and convincing that there was no escape from an unwelcome conclusion, when bold resistance and unreasoning skepticism at last reluctantly gave up the ghost.

6. You express the opinion that "all the inspired visions and wonders" of ancient and modern times must be referred to one common origin ; but you do not tell us how, where, or under what specific conditions they originate. You do not attempt

to show us the relations of subtile forces and natural law to our spiritual faculties and susceptibilities. True, the inquiring mind calls for a logical explanation ; but you explain nothing. We would know the source of this inspiration, the invisible agents employed in the process, if any exist, and what are the laws which govern the generation and expression of inspired ideas. On all questions demanding profound consideration, the recognition of metaphysical principles, or any knowledge of spiritual things, your extreme reticence is suggestive. Nor are we informed what your conception is like when you refer to "*a poet or writer of the nervous exaltation sort.*" You are only explicit on one point, namely, that *all such people are "sick in mind or body."* We often hear it said that the nervous systems of sick people are relaxed, enfeebled or unstrung. But this can hardly have been the condition of the poets to whom you refer. The terms employed rather indicate that in those cases the "harp of a thousand strings" was above concert-pitch.

You give us the mystical number of seven sick geniuses, and then you mention the names of seven others who are said to have been healthy. In the last-mentioned class I find the names of William Shakespeare and John Milton. Perhaps these two great poets excelled all others in the elements of philosophy and sublimity which characterized their writings respectively. But how you may consistently include these great spiritualistic geniuses in your list of normally constituted minds, I fail to comprehend. Shakespeare, in his skeptical mood, makes reference to—

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveler returns."

Yet his own genius rolls the stone from the door of the sepulcher and brings back the spirits of the departed in Hamlet and Macbeth. He empties the graves of the dead in "Midsummer Night's Dream," and makes church-yards populous with Spirits. When the ghost of the murdered king appears to Hamlet, the inspiration of the great poet thus finds expression in the language of invocation :

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us !"

Did the Bard of Avon believe in angels and in the power of Spirits to defend their mortal kindred ? If he did, was he really in a normal state of mind ? If he did not believe in their ability to come, and in their power to shield the defenseless ones, can he be said to have been engaged in a healthy exercise of his faculties in thus giving the weight of his immortal testimony to the support of the world's sacred traditions and the popular superstitions of his age and country ? Did the world's great author—the most philosophical mind in the long list of ancient and modern poets—believe that when a man has lost his cerebrum he has no power to feel, think and act ? And are we to suppose that in his opinion brains are forever indispensable to the man ? No ! Higher wisdom came from the source of his inspiration. In his more exalted moods he knew better, and he makes Macbeth say :

"The times have been,
That when the brains were out, the man was dead,
And there an end ; *but now they rise again !*"

When Shakespeare talks thus and makes the restless spirits of men play important parts in the *dramatis personæ* of his inspired creations, *does he really mean anything ?* Or are we to

take the materialistic view of the subject and presume that all this is only so much spiritual buncombe ?

Milton, too, is furnished with a clean certificate of health at your hands. True, the principal dramatic characters in "Paradise Lost," the theater of the spiritual drama, the shifting scenes and unearthly imagery, are chiefly derived from worlds which no mortal eye ever looked upon. Milton's vision of the celestial rebellion represents Michael and Gabriel warring against Satan—the poet's impersonation of selfish ambition—who was hurled with all his apostate angels from the battlements of heaven down to fathomless perdition. Of course this powerful drama never had any substantial foundation in fact, nor so much as a shadow in the realm of probabilities. Why, then, is it not as good evidence that the author was "sick in body or mind," as Mr. Bigelow finds in the narcotic dreams of De Quincey ?

7. If extreme credulity and blind faith be regarded as a mild form of insanity, so there is a lunacy of obstinate skepticism that paralyzes all the spiritual faculties and so entombs the man in the grave of a soulless materialism. Of this last phase, you, my dear Sir, furnish a most striking illustration. There are thousands of believers in Spiritualism, all over the world, who fairly represent the higher degrees of intellectual and moral development. Among them are not a few trained scientists, many bold and independent thinkers and wise philosophers ; but the Editor of the *Herald and Globe* imagines that if these men are not all fools naturally, they have become such by the excessive credulity "which starts with belief and advances to investigation."

He is a critic of doubtful capacity who makes no distinction between the ripe scholarship of German Universities and the ignorance of the poor negroes who live about the Southern lagoons and people every fen with phantoms. The greatest thinkers of the time : distinguished statesmen and able jurists, eminent poets, sculptors and musical composers, and a constellation of the brightest stars in ancient and modern literature, are all—in your judgment only—to be classed with “the feather-headed Irish peasant,” who finds a bugaboo in every bush and bog. Of course you can have little or no respect for exalted genius and profound erudition so long as they escape your recognition and are utterly confounded with stolid ignorance and the grossest superstitions.

And yet, Sir, with a mere jumble of the incongruities of superficial thought which most resembles the chaos of Moses—being “without form and void”—you come to lecture us on the principles of logic, which, according to Sir William Hamilton’s terse definition, “is the science of the laws of thought.” We like to be respectful always and serious whenever the occasion admits of gravity ; but really, Mr. Bigelow, your attempt to determine by the Rutland standard the intellectual caliber and moral specific gravity of such men as the Editor of the London *Journal of Science* and the Leipzig Professors, is such a grotesque exhibition of presumption that one hardly knows what to anticipate next as an illustration of the lunacy of chronic skepticism. After this we are prepared for almost any Quixotic extravagance, and the public will hardly be surprised should you take an early opportunity to weigh Jupiter’s satellites at the corner grocery !

8. Here we learn the reason why our letter was declined. The editor says, because "it has no proper place in a paper of the sort I publish." If the subject *per se* was unsuited to his columns, why did he drag it in and make Spiritualism the theme of his editorial gasconade? And if it was proper to discuss one side of the question, what impropriety could there have been in giving place to the other? We were disposed to impart some moral vitality to his columns by telling his readers the honest truth about Spiritualism; but he utterly defeated our good intentions. To justify his course he literally assures us that the truth on this subject would be out of its "proper place" in his paper, and on this point he is probably right. We acquiesce with regrets, and the suggestion that Mr. Bigelow might make a small place for the truth in his paper by issuing a large supplement. *Fiat Lux.*

A screeed, in the sense that Mr. Bigelow employs the word, is an harangue, or vehement appeal to the passions of the populace; in other words, it is a noisy tirade, or violent declamation, especially one replete with censure or invective. In our forty years of journalistic work we have never yet published a single paragraph that would warrant such a characterization. When the editor of the *Herald and Globe* designates a dispassionate and philosophical review of his unrighteous assaults upon Spiritualism and its friends as a "*long screeed*," he employs terms without the least regard to their real significance.

Mr. Bigelow assures us that if he libeled a single individual he would "do him justice;" but having unjustly assaulted a large community composed of some millions of individuals, he not only disclaims all moral accountability therefor, but pro-

ceeds to justify the deed by a reference to the base custom and bad habits of unscrupulous politicians. Stripped of its flimsy disguise, this is the hideous immorality that claims immunity for its lax liberty, not for the reason that its acts have any possible merit, nor yet that they even admit of justification, but on the poor plea that these *manifold offenses have been committed on a large scale!* It is on this shaky ground that our Vermont correspondent rests the pleading of not guilty of any wrong.

How shall we characterize the very questionable morality that rests its defense on the magnitude of the wrongs it has committed? Is this plea for justification valid because not one but many have been injured? The world has full long enough been cursed by this false logic which, through all the historic periods, has been made to cover the most gigantic iniquities. The man who commits the larceny of taking a cheap jackknife is called a thief; but one may impoverish a peaceable and defenseless people, by the cunning of a devilish diplomacy, and still be honored as a distinguished citizen; or he may pillage a State, and call his ignoble act by the proud name of conquest. If, in a moment of ungovernable passion one aims a fatal blow at his fellow, he is described as a "miserable assassin;" but the man of lawless ambition may ride through rivers of blood, over the prostrate forms of thousands of his fellow-men, and be hailed as a conqueror! It is time that this infidel standard of morality was utterly demolished. Too long already have we been dazzled and deceived by the splendid glamour of worldly circumstance and the magnitude of human actions. Let honest men apply the scourge to every

specious form of falsehood, and hereafter let all men and their deeds be judged in righteousness.

9. P. S.—In the pursuit of knowledge on philosophical subjects it will never do to thus heedlessly follow the unreasoning crowd. It is only by earnest thought and a precise use of language that we can hope to so convey our ideas as to illuminate the subject and inform the common mind. Bulls bellow and raise a dust by pawing the earth, but bulls are not endowed with reason. It is said that domesticated goats will live upon filthy rags and old shoes ; but goats are never afflicted by delicate appetites and imperfect digestion. The ass is satisfied when he feeds on thistles. He never was a creature of nice discrimination, but will kick at his own shadow hard enough to kill a wise philosopher. It is evident that to escape your animadversion one must be like him—with proverbial obstinacy stick fast in his old tracks, bray aloud, and never trouble himself about definitions.

With the compliments of the season to the Editor of the *Herald and Globe*, from the Editor-at-Large,

S. B. BRITTAN.

SECULAR PRESS BUREAU, 29 BROAD ST., }
NEWARK, N. J., Dec. 24, 1881. }

SUPERFICIAL INVESTIGATION.

HOW SPIRITUALISM IS TREATED IN MINNEAPOLIS.

WRITTEN FOR THE MINNEAPOLIS (MINN.) EVENING JOURNAL.*

A Man of Business Testifies—He Sees the Facts under Test Conditions—Deception said to be Impossible—Jumping at a Conclusion—Nature Preserves her Method—Men who Voice their Ignorance—Illustrations of Natural Law—Intellectual Juvenility—Jesus more Natural because Spiritual—The Investigator Theorizes—Hypothesis of a Distinct Order of Beings—Believing against Evidence—Ignorance and Dogmatism—Spirits as Educators and Physicians—Their Deeds of Charity—Saving the Life of Hon. N. P. Tallmadge—Bursting of Commodore Stockton's Gun—Reformed by a Spirit—Lives Saved by Spirit-warnings—Emancipation Proclamation—Lincoln Inspired to Break the Chains of Slavery—Immortality Demonstrated—Powers of the Spirits—Laws of Spiritual Attraction—Baiting with Deception and Catching Lies—The Subject in its True Light—Waiting for Heavenly Interpreters of Spiritual Mysteries.

SECULAR PRESS BUREAU,

New York, Jan. 26, 1882. }

Editor of the Minneapolis Evening Journal:

MY attention was recently called to an article which appeared in your paper, giving in brief the experience of one of your citizens in his investigation of Spiritual Phe-

* The Journal, to whose editor this letter is addressed, recently published a portion of the same, embracing especially our citation of facts in illustration of the benevolent offices of the Spirits. Reference being had to these facts, he observed—we think with questionable grace—that “*Mr. Brittan's statements may be said to be important, if true.*” He, however, appears to be too well satisfied of their truth already to invite either a further authentication of our statements or additional examples of the same class. The reason is readily apprehended. The facts illustrative of

nomena. The subject to which your editorial refers is not less interesting because some time has elapsed since its publication. You mention the fact that "one of the shrewdest and most successful business men in Minneapolis" had just visited New York (for business purposes, we infer), and that he improved the occasion "to thoroughly investigate the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism." In judging of what constitutes a thorough investigation, all men are necessarily limited by their knowledge, respectively, of the particular subject of inquiry. The leisure hours a Western merchant, or other business man, might find while pursuing his temporal interests for a few days in the commercial Metropolis, would scarcely suffice for anything like a thorough investigation of a subject so profound in its principles, so widely diversified in its phenomenal illustrations, and so far-reaching and revolutionary in its prospective results.

The facts witnessed were of such a nature that the gentleman from your city was perfectly satisfied "they could not have been performed by any human or other known physical agency." He heard the writing "between slates" and read the messages where "the slates a moment before had presented a clear surface." This shrewd observer "saw Spirit-forms clearly;" he also "felt the touch of spirit-hands distinctly." These phenomena he is said to have observed "under conditions where there could not possibly be any collusion or trick."

the beneficent objects and uses of this intercourse with our Spiritual Visitors, utterly demolish the theory of his "clear-headed" fellow-citizen, and with it the bold, dogmatic and unfounded assumption "that Spiritual communications never lead to any good."

It appears that he did not entertain a single doubt of the transmundane origin of the illustrations of intelligence and power which occurred under his critical inspection. So far his previous skepticism appears to have yielded to evidence about as readily as wax melts in the flame, and we are ready to question the judgment of the man whose faith is so easily established. Indeed, it would seem to be a peculiarity of this man's faith that he can believe just as well without evidence and even *against evidence*. That I may avoid even the appearance of injustice in my treatment of your fellow-citizen's case, allow me to here reproduce so much of the article under review as follows in this connection :

“ The conclusion he arrived at was, that there are supernatural agencies controlled by the medium or controlling the medium ; that there are veritable ‘spirits’ which visit the earth and perform these tricks ; but that these spirits are not the souls of departed human beings. They belong, he thinks, to an inferior order of beings. They are mischievous, false, malicious, trifling, insincere, and often devilish. Communication with them never leads to any good. The whole influence is bad and demoralizing. They are, he thinks very likely, the familiar spirits and devils alluded to so often in the Scriptures. While these spirits evidently belong to an inferior creation, they yet possess some powers unknown to us. They can, for instance, project one solid through another without breaking either. They appear to be able to resolve substances into their original elements, and then put the elements together again in their original form. In this way flower and other materialization may be accounted for. But in other respects their powers are very limited. They might see a thief rob a house, but would be unable to inform the victim of the robbery, or to communicate any information on any subject. If they could there would be no such thing as privacy, and the habits of the human race would be revolutionized. It is possible, he thinks, that the souls of the departed may sometimes communicate with mortals through these familiar spirits ; but if they do the spirits are so given to lying that no reliance can be placed upon what they say.

“ The *Evening Journal* gives some space to these speculations, because

they are the views of a gentleman who is regarded by his acquaintances as remarkably clear-headed. His judgment is sound on all business matters ; he never 'slops over' or goes off on a tangent, or accepts theories without careful consideration. Nor has he ever been supposed to be in the least bit superstitious. His explanation of spiritual phenomena opens up wide fields of thought and curious speculation, but it does not add materially to the attractiveness of Spiritualism as a form of religious faith."

1. *Your friend concludes that "there are supernatural agencies either controlled by the medium or controlling the medium ;" that these agencies "are veritable spirits which visit the earth and perform these tricks."*

Here the old supernaturalism crops out, which has its origin and end in the popular ignorance of the extent and capacities of Nature. It stands in the way of rational thought and all progressive ideas. Let us make a slight effort to blot it out, here and now. Nature is a vastly greater institution than has been conceived of even in the mind of the profoundest philosopher of the time. Let it be remembered that Nature is never limited by the narrow scope of our information. It is the inevitable tendency of the ignorant mind to assign to supernatural causes all effects which it cannot explain by reference to some physical cause within the narrow limits of its own comprehension. A man living under the equator, without any knowledge of other parts of the world, would naturally conclude that, without a miracle, water could never become solid ; and yet it is perfectly natural for water to freeze at the proper temperature. The people in polar regions may never sweat when the mercury is freezing, but the application of a warm vapor-bath and plenty of capsicum tea would convince an Icelander that it is perfectly natural for men to perspire freely

under suitable conditions. Tell an ignorant person that the water contained in *one gallon measure* may be made to fill the measure of *eighteen hundred gallons*, and he would never believe; but we have only to convert the gallon of water into steam, and the fact is demonstrated.

Thousands of illustrations might be drawn from Nature and science to show that when we talk about *Supernaturalism* we only babble or voice our ignorance. There is nothing supernatural which is likely to come under our observation in this world. All the phenomena of matter and mind are natural, and whatever we call supernatural may serve to define the limit of our information. The light of Aldebaran is as natural as that of a glow-worm or a fire-fly. We are prone to think that small things, and the circumstances of daily experience, are all strictly natural, whilst great events—phenomena of rare occurrence and characters which only once shed their superior light on the darkness of ages—may be supernatural. This is the very common misapprehension of our intellectual juvenility. The truth is, the rose that blossoms every month under the cottage window is no more natural than the century plant, that only sends up its great stalk and displays its magnificent corolla to the sun once in one hundred years.

A similar course of illustration is no less applicable to the highest types of mankind. Jesus of Nazareth was even more natural than ordinary men, for the reason that his beautiful life was more in harmony with the laws of Nature. The intelligence of the highest archangel is neither unnatural nor supernatural, because in our low estate we have no rule by which we may measure his sublime capacity. In proportion

as our knowledge of Nature is enlarged the realm that embraces what we regard as supernatural is diminished in our apprehension, until at length, from some moral eminence in the Universe, the soul, with unclouded vision, looks over the vast spheres of organic life and all human relations, and discovers that *all things are natural*.

Your friend was perfectly satisfied that what he is pleased to characterize as "*these tricks*" were performed by "veritable spirits which visit the earth" from some other sphere of existence; and yet the terms you employ show that his investigation did not so much as enable him to determine whether the so-called "supernatural agents controlled the medium," or, on the contrary, were subject to his own arbitrary exercise of power. This is a preliminary question of no little consequence, and it is not to be presumed that an investigation was at all thorough which left it wholly unsettled in the judgment of the inquirer. Moreover, until this fundamental question is effectually disposed of, how can your friend logically conclude that the facts are to be referred to a superterrestrial or spiritual agency? If it shall hereafter appear that this intelligent controlling power—exhibited in the production of the essential facts—*is in the medium*, where shall we look for the evidence of any foreign spiritual agency whatever? If the governing power, as illustrated in the development of the mysterious phenomena, really belongs to and is exercised by the medium, we may perhaps dismiss the Spirits altogether, since, in this case, their agency would seem to be quite unnecessary as a factor in the solution of this problem.

2. "*But these spirits are not the souls of departed human be-*

ings. They belong, he thinks, to an inferior order of beings. They are mischievous, false, malicious, trifling, insincere and often devilish."

Should we admit the truth of what he here affirms respecting the character of his own spiritual visitors, the assumption that they are not human would find no possible confirmation in such an admission. It would still be no less manifest that this "remarkably clear-headed" citizen shows his capacity to believe not only without evidence, but *against evidence*. What does he know of a separate order of spiritual beings, inferior to men? Nothing, whatever; and the rest of mankind know no more. Outside of heathen myths and fables, the fanciful conceptions of pious priests and inspired poets, the nursery tales of ignorant old women, and the realm of popular superstitions of the Dark Ages, there is not the smallest vestige of evidence to support such an assumption.

In the investigation of phenomena it is regarded as unphilosophical to assume the existence of hypothetical causes or unknown agents, when those already demonstrated to exist will enable us to account for all of the facts. Now, the gentleman whose opinions you represent violates this admitted principle of a scientific philosophy. In the case under discussion, the facts all plainly show that *the intelligence displayed is most essentially human*. The facts that some spirits are inclined to trifle with grave subjects, that others evince a mischievous disposition whilst, here and there, some malicious spirit stands revealed, neither prove that these intelligences belong to a discrete order of beings, nor that they are inferior to the human species. The facts furnish no evidence to support either of

the foregoing propositions. There are multitudes of mischievous people in this world, and they are constantly going over to the other country. They carry with them all of their inborn and acquired characteristics, and of course many continue to practice mischief so long as they are thus disposed. The entrance to the other world no more changes either a mischievous or malicious man than the act of entering the Queen's palace converts an ignorant clown into a polished courtier.

Now what if some of the Spirits are devilish in the worst sense implied by your fellow-citizen? The Church maintains that much the larger part of the human race are sent to hell forever, where they are beyond the possible inclination to reform, and are thus forced to an everlasting life of willful disobedience, insane opposition to natural law, and hatred of all that is essentially beautiful, supremely good, and absolutely true. We by no means sanction such views when we refer to them; but if there is so much as the faintest shadow of truth in the fundamental doctrines of the Church, why object to the human spiritual origin of the facts on the ground that some of them reveal a wicked disposition toward man and a rebellious spirit against God!

3. "*Communication with them [the Spirits] never leads to any good. The whole influence is bad and demoralizing.*"

As a revelation of egotistical presumption and entire ignorance of the real facts of Spiritualism, nothing could exceed this brief statement. After a few hours' investigation a business man decides that *no good has ever resulted from intercourse with Spirits*. The arbitrary *dictum* of this man involves an assumption of all knowledge on this subject. Let me re-

spectfully inform him that hundreds of millions of communications have come from Spirits within the last thirty years, covering many tons of paper. In his dogmatic confidence he assumes to know the contents and character of all these messages from the Spirit-world and also the effects they have produced on mankind. In view of this assumption it appears that a man may exercise "sound judgment" in business, and yet be wholly incompetent to deal with a subject of this nature. It is precisely here that your friend betrays his great weakness. His accredited shrewdness does not transcend the mundane sphere of his business relations. The soundness of his judgment would have been more conspicuously revealed had he suppressed the spasmodic conclusions of his obvious ignorance and the intense self-consciousness which finds the sole object of respect and worship in the *Ego*.

Now what has any one to gain by a wild extravagance of statement in the attempt to conceal or disguise the truth? I take no risk in saying that *every man and woman* in the country who is not morally blind, may—if thus disposed—find the means at hand to disprove this man's assertion. The writer could cite a thousand facts, giving names and dates if necessary, any one of which would suffice to completely upset the shallow assumption that no good ever comes from communication with Spirits. You have not the space for an extended statement, and I will, therefore, confine myself to the following summary of a few of the good deeds known to have been performed by Spirits, or at their instigation:

Many ignorant people have been very well educated under spiritual influence and direction, and without the aid of mor-

tal teachers or masters. Spirits have restored many persons to health who were dangerously ill, by sending prescriptions to them, often unsolicited, and otherwise, by direct spiritual influence exerted on the mediumistic patient. Persons have been sent by Spirits to the starving and freezing inmates of lonely garrets and damp cellars with food, fuel and clothing, even late at night, by which means the sufferers have been preserved and made comfortable. Many valuable lives have been saved by Spirit-warnings of impending danger. The late HON. N. P. TALLMADGE, ex-United States Senator from New York, and ex-Governor of Wisconsin, was thus saved from instant death when Commodore Stockton's great gun burst, killing two cabinet ministers and other gentlemen. I recall the case of a young man who treated his aged parents with great cruelty. A Spirit came visibly before him, while he was at work in the field, and told him, in so many words, to *mend his ways*, or he might look for a sudden second coming of the Spirit as a messenger of judgment. This spiritual visitation was the means of a complete reformation. The maddening bowl has been dashed from more than one man's lips by a Spirit who suddenly controlled the nerves and muscles of voluntary motion in the impressible subject. Several persons have been admonished not to take passage on certain vessels and particular trains which were wrecked while on their way with great loss of life. Such cases occurred in connection with the ocean steamer Pacific and the Norwalk Railroad disaster. Spirits have opened the way to pleasant homes for many destitute children. At their instigation the venerated LINCOLN was inspired to perform the grandest act of his life

in raising no less than three millions of down-trodden human beings up to the dignity of individual freedom and citizenship. The Spirits have nerved many a poor mortal to bear his heavy cross up the rugged steep to a higher life. They have demonstrated the truth of immortality to millions whose uncertain faith and hope demanded this confirmation. Thus have they poured the light of the everlasting Morning through the dark "valley and shadow of death," rendering the "king of terrors" powerless, and the final surrender of the expiring mortal the grandest earthly victory!

In the light of such illustrations, what becomes of the reckless assertion that the whole influence of the Spirits is corrupt and demoralizing? When men will thus theorize without the slightest regard to essential principles, or the least reference to the facts in the case; and error, in its blind blundering, spills the unclean contents of its old bottle over our heads, we are not thankful for the foul baptism, though, as a mere matter of courtesy, we may listen to the pleasant assurance, that *these people "never 'slop over,' go off in a tangent, or accept theories without careful consideration!"*

4. "*These spirits . . . can, for instance, project one solid through another without breaking either. They appear to be able to resolve substances into their original elements and then put the elements together again in the original form. In this way flower and other materializations may be accounted for. But in other respects their powers are very limited. They might see a thief rob a house, but would be unable to inform the victim of the robbery, or to communicate any information on any subject.*"

Here the most amazing power over matter is attributed to

Spirits. They are credited with the ability to pass one solid body through another, without any apparent disturbance of the molecular contents of either. They are presumed to possess such a subtile knowledge of the laws of chemistry, that they can decompose compound substances at will ; disorganize and reorganize bodies by the simple act of volition ; and yet it is positively affirmed that they do not know enough to expose a thief if they had the inclination ; in short, that they are incapable of imparting "*any information on any subject.*" It seems to me that no man outside of a lunatic asylum ever entertained a more irrational hypothesis. Of course it is only logical to infer, that the capacity of an intelligent being to impart information must bear some relative proportion to the measure of his attainments. And yet the gentleman whose views you represent attributes the noblest faculties of mind, and seemingly miraculous powers of will, to beings who are said to be too stupid to serve as witnesses in a police court ! Here is the amazing credulity that believes against evidence, and the unreasoning faith that rests on anything and everything but recognized principles and demonstrated facts.

It is not the fault of Spiritualism that its enemies often attract unclean spirits when they go to investigate. As a rule we draw to our presence natures of similar tastes and inclinations, and we may not hope to subvert the moral laws which regulate this intercourse. It is well known that such people often go to the medium under a cloak of fraudulent representation. In their inquiries they often attempt to deceive, and it comes to pass that "a fool" is sometimes answered "according to his folly." In angling among Spirits, *if one baits with*

deception he will be sure to catch a lie ; and who will presume to say that he is not justly served ?

Mr. Editor, there is a significant truth and peculiar force in the present application of the concluding words of your editorial under review. The peculiar "field of thought and curious speculation," opened by the class of investigators whom you represent, surely "does not add materially to the attractions of Spiritualism as a form of religious faith." Here you are quite right, and it gives me pleasure to be able to indorse your final conclusion. Spiritualism, as painted under the hand of your friend, certainly has no attractions worth mentioning. To see this great subject in a true light ; to comprehend the Spiritual Philosophy in its relations to the possible achievements of Science and the future glory of Religion ; to appreciate the essential divinity of its principles and the amazing grandeur of its far-reaching aims and issues, we must seek for some clearer and more heavenly-minded interpreter.

I have the honor to vindicate, Sir,

"The Truth against the World."

SOARING AND SINGING.

BY S. B. BRITTAN.

THE SKY-LARK.

“Over the rich ripe corn
The lark her tremulous voice has raised,
And out in the early dawn,
The earth at her melody stands amazed.”

Christmas Card.

LIST, while the song, so rich and rare,
Descends along the sky-light stair
Of the upper air ;
It comes to me in early June,
When life and all things are in tune—
Like a poet's rune.

Oh, sing and soar—sing at the dawn !
If I've no fields of rip'ning corn,
Still sing in the morn.
Above my neighbor's waving maize,
I hear thee in the summer days,
And heavenward gaze.

Sweet bird of the aspiring wing,
As ever in the morning sing—
Make the welkin ring,
With music from thy silver horn,
Above the wealth of golden corn,
While the fields are shorn.

Thy morning song my hopes inspire,
Now quickened, as with vital fire,
I may go higher !
After the bird that soars and sings,
Above all low and meaner things—
On her tireless wings.

Oh, happy bird ! thy cheerful lays
Awake my heart to joy and praise !
Through the frost and haze—
And storm of this autumnal night—
We look for Wisdom's ways of right,
And heavenly Light.

OUR SPIRITUAL GUESTS.

HOW THEY BECOME VISIBLE AND TANGIBLE.

BY S. B. BRITTAN.

Introductory Observations—Order of Natural Development Illustrated—The Noblest Work Unfinished—The Spirit Visitors of All Ages—Absolute Reality of the Phenomena—Citation of Facts—Testimony of History and Experience—Startling Illustrations—Ben Jonson Entertains his Guests—Séance of the “Miracle Circle”—Zalphi, the Greek Girl—A Being of Unearthly Beauty—A Retired Merchant Announces his own Death—Classification of the Phenomena—Opening the Interior Avenues of Sensation—Psychological Pictures—Spiritual Transfigurations—The Question of Materialization—Philosophical Exposition—Critical Review of the Facts—Extremes of Skepticism and Credulity—How Spirits Operate on our Senses—Illustrations from Cicero and Virgil—Weighing a Spirit in Vermont—How the Indian Maid may Turn the Scale—A Conundrum for the Philosophers—One Law governs all Corporeal Bodies—Apparitions of the Living Explained—Superstition retires to Congenial Night—Daylight Comes with Spiritual Science—Affiliation of Congenial Souls.

Mother of Science !, Let me feel thy power
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of higher agents.

—*Milton.*

IN the production of all physical forms the Supreme Intelligence works through material elements and natural laws. This appears to be the universal order of Nature. By the slow processes of aggregation and crystallization the rocks are formed, and Nature deposits her vast mineral wealth. By a power of molecular attraction the atoms congregate, and one by one silently gravitate to their places. Nature converts the rayless carbon into precious gems that scintillate from delicate

fingers or flash their iridescent light over the forms of beauty. In her hands even *charcoal* assumes a pure, crystalline form, and is thus made to illuminate true and false bosoms and to sparkle like stars in every royal tiara. In all this we have a grand chapter in the cosmological history of prehistoric periods.

By the laws of accretion and organic formation, universal vegetation germinates, and all things in this great kingdom are formed. Thus plants grow and the primitive forests are made to cover the rugged hills. It is always by a slow process that

“Tall oaks from little acorns grow.”

By degrees, as the years come and go, they grasp the solid earth with their roots, and stretch out their brawny arms toward the spirits of the storm, while the winds sweep the chords and wake the music of the sylvan lyre. Trees of any considerable magnitude require from twenty to *three hundred years* for their complete development. In speaking of the great cedars of California, we may use the figure which Napoleon applied to the pyramids—Centuries look down from their tops!

In the order of Nature there is one general method whereby she repeoples the animal kingdom and the human world. Nature invariably works through the laws of procreation, organic development and the subtile chemistry of digestion and assimilation. In this way, by gradual processes, from which there is no departure, she constructs and repairs the tissues and the bones of all animal and human bodies. We know of no other method by which they may be produced. While it is possible for human intelligence, on earth and in the higher spheres—by the concentrated application of subtile forces—to *greatly*

accelerate the processes of the physical universe, we may not generate the simplest organic form by any means or methods outside of the established order of the natural world.

It will be perceived that the creative energy or formative power works by general laws, and never by special enactments, spasmodic efforts, or miraculous means. After everything is ready it takes full fifty years to fairly block out a respectable specimen of the human race ; and then, as a rule, the animal so far predominates that it is difficult to find the man. For thousands of years—how many I cannot say—God has been employed on man ; and thus far we have his “last and noblest work ” only in the rough. Let no one say that my words are irreverent until he has fairly weighed the language of the pulpit. The doctors of divinity assure us that they are doing much to assist the Lord in his work of perfecting human nature ; but that man, after all, and at this late day, is such a miserable failure that the best of us deserve to be eternally damned ! Indeed, we are obliged to admit that man is very far from being completed. He is still full of imperfections, and it will require centuries to finish him ; but in the end the divine faculties and pure affections, with all spiritual gifts and graces, may be so combined and illustrated in his nature and life that the living God shall set his seal upon him,

“ To give the world assurance of a MAN.”

In the vast realms of unorganized matter and organic life, we have never witnessed a single departure from the established laws and material processes of the physical universe, except so far as the application of those laws may have been

especially directed, and those processes modified by some intervention of human intelligence. One such departure, clearly demonstrated, would forever unsettle our confidence in Nature. We could no longer depend on the certain execution of her laws. Being in doubt in respect to what might happen in our experience, we should be disturbed by the perpetual apprehension of impending calamities. Such a departure from the natural economy of the world would answer to the vulgar conception of *a miracle*, and that is something we seldom read of except in theological disquisitions, while we wait to behold a single actual illustration.

With these general observations on the laws and processes of the physical world, as revealed in the whole external creation, I pass to a consideration of those phenomenal illustrations of spiritual presence and power now commonly designated and known as *the materialization of Spirits*, or the demonstrative proofs that departed human beings have power to temporarily clothe themselves with real material bodies, chemically compounded and completely organized from the ponderable elements of this world. Apparitions of the living and the dead have been frequent in all ages and countries ; but the skeptical world has ever regarded them as either psychological hallucinations or optical illusions. Shakespeare makes one of his characters say,

“ I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition.”

In earlier times these preternatural visitors were wont to appear in great emergencies. They were dark or luminous,

according to their several degrees of moral elevation, the particular objects of their mission, and the character of those to whom they appeared. They came as solemn heralds of mournful events, when death or some fearful ordeal was impending ; —after long fasting and devout exercises ; in seasons of great darkness, of deep sorrow and humiliation of spirit. They revealed their presence when conscience, “like another self,” mysteriously invaded the silent chambers of the guilty soul ; and they were visible in hours of great spiritual exaltation and heroic achievement. In the long centuries, old and dim, these shadowy figures frequented the solitary places ; they stood by the altars of the old prophets ; they walked with the Druidical priesthood through the lofty aisles of the solemn woods ; their spectral forms were seen on the desolate moors ; they appeared in graveyards and near the scenes of fearful tragedies ; they visited the ruins of old castles and monasteries, and were visible in the moonlight.

In these days our Spiritual Visitors assume a more natural appearance, and are disposed to cultivate a closer acquaintance. They not only walk in darkness and haunt the silent dwelling-places of men at midnight, but they come at all hours and into many places. They come to the student in his meditation ; to the vacant chair by the lonely hearthstone ; to the couch of expiring mortality, and to the sorrowing heart that supplicates their inspiring presence and their loving ministry. With strange or familiar faces they meet us in the charmed circle of our home-life, or may peer at us from the windows of the cabinet. They give us, through many voices, the homiletics of another world ; and they puzzle the professors of art

magic by keeping their machinery and confederates all out of sight, while they improvise new fabrics of something like *wool* which they pull over our eyes from bare boards and solid walls. They tax the gratitude of the unbeliever by bringing him fresh flowers, ripe fruits and singing birds. One of the later expounders of the occult sciences was present when *a materialized spirit was weighed and not found wanting in respect to her avoir du pois*. Then she danced a hornpipe in a style peculiarly human and altogether earthly. This was a fact in materialization that the Persian priests of Zoroaster never witnessed. Let us see how history is repeating itself. The magicians of ancient Egypt were obliged to yield the palm to Moses at last, the Jewish historian being the witness; and so our most conspicuous and lively champions of their arts are obliged to acknowledge that there is a considerable margin of genuine spiritual facts which the soiled and ragged mantle of the magicians of all ages will never cover.

The numerous facts now recognized as examples of the materialization of spirits have been quite frequent in different ages and countries. The seers and prophets of all the past were familiar with the apparitions of departed human beings. The sacred literature of the ancient nations is illuminated by their presence, while profane history offers many examples. The cases have been so frequent in the experience of all the races of men that it is quite impossible to account for them by the convenient hypotheses of optical illusions and mental hallucination. The forms which are presented to the vision and the touch seem at least to possess, in a greater or less degree, all the physical attributes, qualities and functions of form, size,

apparent weight, color, tangibility and locomotion, with the occasional superaddition of oral speech. In spite of popular skepticism, the sensuous habits of men, and all the cunning devices of the modern schools of scientific materialism, the mere forces and laws of matter offer no solution of the mysterious problem. The reality and frequency of such phenomena are clearly enough established if we may respect human testimony and credit authentic history. The facts are now more numerous than ever before, and the rational mind has no alternative but to accept them as demonstrative proofs of the actual presence of Spirits. This is our only choice, in respect to the real facts, whatever may be the particular theory or philosophy adopted in their explanation.

Having admitted the reality of the phenomena and also the agency of Spirits in their production (which we have never doubted), we are now to institute a philosophical inquiry into the essential nature of the facts and the particular modes of manifestation. Do Spirits so clothe themselves with the elements of matter as to be perceived through the ordinary avenues of sensation? Do they really extemporize bodies possessing all the chemical constituents and organic parts belonging to the corporeal forms which they occupied during their rudimental life on the earth? Or, by what other means and methods do they show themselves to mortals?

And here I can not omit the observation that many persons who set out in their investigation of Spiritualism by disputing all former revelations, especially the marvels recorded in Jewish and Christian histories, frequently run wild, in their extravagant assumptions, to the opposite extreme of unreasoning

credulity. It is quite common for such people to express their contempt for the elder prophets and seers, and to ridicule the just claims of inspired Apostles ; at the same time they are ready to swear to the infallibility of their own chosen medium. These novices talk of freedom and liberality while they take their place

“ With bigots, who but one way see,
Through blinkers of authority.”

The most improbable views are often accepted with the utmost favor. Theories of the phenomena under discussion obtain currency which are believed to be at once inconsistent with the laws of Nature, the decisions of enlightened reason, and the discoveries of science.

At present I have neither time nor space to meddle with those elementary Spirits which I can only regard as the monstrous creations of rudimental natures, begotten in the night of superstition and born of the human mind in its far distant wanderings from Nature and Reason. I can not here attempt an argument in refutation of the Pythagorean dogma of metempsychosis, as revived in the philosophy of Allan Kardec and in the minds of his French, Spanish and American disciples. For the present I must confine myself to a discussion of the essential facts illustrating the visible presence of Spirits, the vaguely defined theory of materialization, and an imperfect exposition of what I conceive to be a rational philosophy of the subject.

It is especially worthy of observation that, through all past ages, the facts of this particular class have never appeared to depend, in any considerable degree, on any particular combina-

tion of material elements and surrounding objects ; not much on a prearrangement of physical instruments, mental states and moral qualities ; nor especially on any nice adjustment of conditions depending on the coöperation of mortals. At the same time it may be conceded that certain conditions are doubtless required, and also that a proper knowledge and observance of these cannot fail to render the results more certain and satisfactory. I will here briefly refer to such illustrative examples as may serve to exhibit the real character and general aspects of the phenomena. The statement and analysis of a few representative examples will be all that the case imperatively demands. In the hope of adapting my summary treatment of the subject to different classes of minds, these facts shall be selected from both sacred and profane history and from the personal experiences of living witnesses.

When Saul went to the Seeress of Endor he disguised himself, but was unable to preserve his *incognito* after Samuel appeared. From that moment the woman recognized her visitor, and said, "Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul." It does not appear that the king really saw the spirit at all ; for, addressing the medium, he inquired, "What sawest thou?" . . . "What form is he of?" "And she said : 'An old man cometh up ; and he is covered with a mantle.' And Saul perceived or inferred [evidently from the description] that it was Samuel" (1 Sam. xxviii. chapter).

In the sixth chapter of the Second Book of Kings will be found the record of a remarkable illustration of the subject. The Jews were at war with the Syrians, who came by night and surrounded the place that contained the king and the

prophet Elisha. In the morning the prophet's servant was greatly alarmed when he saw that the Syrian hosts encompassed the city. But the prophet was not dismayed. He recognized the presence of a much more numerous host all invisible to his servant. At length—in answer to the prophet's prayer—the inward vision of his servant appears to have been opened, for suddenly he, too, beheld the vast multitude of celestial warriors filling the air; they were gathered for the defense of their mortal kindred. Then there followed what really appears to have been the grandest conceivable display of psychological power. The whole Syrian army—if we may credit the account—was smitten with temporary blindness by the power of the Spirit-world! Placing himself at the head of the Syrian legions, Elisha then bade them follow him, and he led them into the walled city, Samaria, where they were all captured without the loss of a single life.

In that remarkable dramatic poem entitled the Book of Job, we have this sublime description of the appearance of a Spirit: “In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It [the spirit] stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?” (Job, chap. iv. 13-17.)

In the prophecy of Daniel we have an account of a great feast, given by Belshazzar, the king, to “a thousand of his lords” and a numerous company of his wives and concubines.

Having desecrated the vessels stolen from the temple at Jerusalem, the whole assembly was engaged in drunken revelry, praising "the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." (Daniel, chap. v. 1-5.)

Moses and Elias made their appearance on the solemn occasion of the transfiguration of a great spiritual prophet and Friend of the People. According to the Evangelist, Jesus, after his crucifixion, first appeared to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven disorderly spirits. He next appeared, it is said "*in another form*" to two friends who were out for a walk in the country; subsequently to the eleven apostles while they were at supper, whom he severely reprimanded for their skepticism as to his continued existence and ability to make his presence known; and, finally—according to Paul—to more than five hundred persons at once.

John was in exile by the imperial edict of the last of the Cæsars, on Patmos, one of the Grecian Islands. It was near the close of the first century, when he was visited by the spirit of one of the elder prophets, who inspired him, and presented—while the medium was in a state of spiritual entrancement—a series of psychological pictures on the grandest conceivable scale, terminating with the vision of the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. The Revelator was so completely awed by the presence of the heavenly messenger; so profoundly impressed by his teachings; so deeply entranced by the splendor of the celestial city and the spiritual significance

of its imagery, that he "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel." But this ancient prophet declined to receive divine honors, saying, "See thou do it not ; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : Worship God."

Before the battle of Philippi it is said that a spirit appeared to Marcus Junius Brutus and warned him of his impending fate. The great Prophet-warrior who made the conquest of Arabia indulged in frequent communion with invisible spirits, and especially with one whom he believed to be the Angel Gabriel. Cromwell was visited while a youth by a mysterious female, who informed him that the child, at one time so near being destroyed by an ape, was born to rule the State. The beautiful Maid of Orleans, while walking in the garden, was addressed by a Spirit in an audible voice. From that time she had frequent interviews with her celestial visitor, whom she believed to be St. Michael. Others came to her who were said to be St. Catherine and St. Margaret. They told her where she would find a consecrated sword in the crypt of an old cavalier in the church of St. Catherine ; and with that sword—inspired by the shades of departed heroes—she led the armies of France to victory and Charles VII. to his throne.

The great seer of Stockholm was fifty-five years old when he first saw a Spirit. Swedenborg was dining at an inn in London. Having at the time an unusual appetite he was eating very rapidly, when he distinctly saw a little man in the corner of the room, surrounded by a great light. The illuminated personage addressed him in a terrible voice, saying : "Do not eat so fast !" From that time Spirits were his famil-

iar companions. One day as he was walking along Cheapside with a friend, the Baron suddenly bowed very low, assigning as a reason his recognition of the presence of Moses. At another time a widow lady requested him to seek an interview with her deceased husband, for the purpose of obtaining some information of great consequence. Swedenborg complied, saw the man, obtained the required information, and at once informed her where she would find a missing paper, the absence of which had prevented the settlement of her husband's estate.

Frederica Hauffe, the Seeress of Prevorst—a pure child of Nature, born and reared among the rugged summits of Wirtemberg—saw Spirits on various occasions. Her first experience was on her wedding day. For some time she had suffered from deep mental depression. The funeral of her minister occurred on the very day of her marriage. She was standing by the open grave, when his spirit appeared to her in a form of light, and from that moment every feeling of despondency was dissipated. She continued to converse freely with Spirits, and often learned from them the history of their lives on earth. The departure of Frederica from the checkered scenes of her mortal existence was signalized by their manifest presence. A bright figure appeared in the room; it was visible to the sister who watched by the bedside of the patient. Suddenly the Seeress uttered a loud cry, expressive of the most ecstatic joy, and two spirits vanished together.

I here close the citation of historical examples, and will now offer some illustrative facts on my own authority, leaving my readers to recall others from the current literature and the records of their private experience.

One night, in 1852, I attended a spiritual *séance* at a private house in Bridgeport, Conn. A large number of friends had assembled; the manifestations were highly diversified and every way extraordinary. In the course of the evening the company was informed by the Spirits that the present writer was to be ordained anew, and to a more spiritual ministry. I had once been ordained by the imposition of the hands of a priesthood which never had any faith in the vital importance of the ceremony. Of course no gift of the Holy Ghost nor any other spirit came to me from those ministerial palms. They conferred no new powers. The Spirits seeing that this was but a hollow sham proposed a new ordination which was not all an unmeaning ceremony. Immediately after their purpose was announced, I felt a large hand placed upon the coronal and frontal portions of the head. It remained there for some minutes with an apparent pressure of several pounds, and was accompanied by a thrilling sensation which left no part of the body uninfluenced. The presence of the palm and every separate finger was distinctly impressed upon the sensorium. This was so real, that I instinctively attempted to seize the arm, which, it really seemed to me, must be there in connection with that hand. As often as I made the attempt. I closed my hand on vacancy. I only clutched the air. That muscular hand remained, and I essayed to grasp it in my own. There was nothing there that could be perceived through the sensory nerves of my right arm.

In 1854, while present—by invitation from the spirit of Ben Jonson—at a *séance* in New York, of what was known as the “Miracle Circle,” the whole company had the positive evi-

dence of one sense, that a huge animal—apparently a dog of the largest size—was present and endowed with life and locomotion. He came in sensible contact with the lower limbs of the persons present. At length the animal, starting from beneath the table, forced his way out between myself and the person at my left, separating our limbs so as to leave a space of a foot or more between us. No form, living or dead, could have been more tangible ; yet, at the same time, *the intervening space was vacant to the sense of vision.*

Among the immortals whose presence has been most distinctly revealed to me are two female spirits. One calls herself the ENCHANTRESS. This spirit came to me many years ago, for the purpose—as she then declared—of increasing the magnetic and psychological powers which I have so long exercised in my experimental investigations, and for the relief of suffering humanity. The other, whose name on earth—so the spirit informs me—was ZALPHI, says she was a Greek girl, and lived in ancient Athens. She affirms that the object of her mission to the writer is to develop the perception and love of the Beautiful ; to aid in all æsthetic studies, and to quicken aspiration toward the absolute Perfection. The finest types of earthly beauty, and the love-life of the poet's dreams, afford only faint suggestions of such transcendent loveliness ! Beautiful in form and feature, and more radiant in expression than Rafael's Virgin, is this fair-haired maiden of the land of Solon and Sappho. All powers of description utterly fail ; art can never transfer the radiant image to canvas ; even Genius would be dumb before the illuminated presence of the pure being, from whose inner life is diffused a soft, rosy light—

flowing through fleecy robes of spotless purity—more glorious to behold than

“The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.”

The late Stephen Dudley, a wealthy retired merchant of Buffalo, N. Y., died suddenly in that city more than twenty years since. It was his last request that the writer should be sent for to speak at his funeral. His sons telegraphed to my address in New Jersey; but I was absent in Maine at that time, and did not receive the slightest intimation of his departure until I reached Hartford, Conn., on my way home. While there, at the house of a friend, in the full light of midday, he suddenly appeared, standing before me between two windows opening toward the east. A strong but mellow light, illuminating the coronal portion of the head, and the upper part of the face, gave him a transfigured appearance, as if the rising sun was pouring a flood of golden rays through the window upon the brow of one of the noblest looking men the sun had ever shone upon. Perfect in form, feature and expression, he continued to be visible not much less than ten minutes. He made no communication, but from that very moment I felt assured that his mortal life was finished. There were five other persons present, one of whom saw my spiritual visitor distinctly; and without any intimation from me, or previous knowledge of the man, described his personality in every detail, including attitude and position, all with the strictest fidelity to nature and the facts. The next day he came to me again, and said: “My dear Brittan, I am with you still, *but in the spirit.*” Up to this hour I had not re-

ceived the slightest intimation of the departure of my friend from this world through any external or mundane channel of communication.

These examples, selected from various sources, ancient and modern, are sufficient for my present purpose, since they represent the several phases of the phenomena now so generally named "*the materialization of Spirit forms.*" The physical and spiritual conditions under which the facts occurred seem to have been quite as diversified as the wide range of human characters, pursuits and circumstances. In no one instance does there appear to have been any previous arrangement of persons or other objects ; no regard was had to the state of the atmosphere, the electrical and magnetic forces and relations of human bodies, or the moral qualities of the persons present. It is often objected that the screen of the cabinet affords an opportunity for the practice of deception. But the illustrative examples here furnished do not admit of this objection. No cabinets with curtains or screens were required ; no paraphernalia of dinner-bells, tambourines, tin trumpets and old fiddles to divert attention ; no lights subdued to the exact measure which renders all figures specter-like ; no "dim, religious light" that may veil the features to indistinctness and obscure the ever-varying expressions of the human face ; no motion of the magician's wand ; no spells of enchantment ; nor magical arts and monotonous incantations were employed in the process of producing visible Spirit-forms, either to harmonize the circle or to mystify the spectators ; and yet the Spirits were able to "put in an appearance" and to command recognition.

Let no one infer that I am disposed to question the genuineness of many of the phenomena which occur in connection with the cabinet. Spirits certainly have power to show themselves there as elsewhere ; but in resting the claims of Spiritualism on any class of facts, I deem it best to select examples which offer to the skeptical mind the least ground of objection. In respect to the cabinet manifestations, it seems proper that each particular example should be examined and judged on its own intrinsic merits ; and if, in the end, there remains a question concerning the reality of such facts, it is only just to give the medium the benefit of the doubt.

Let us now subject the facts to such an examination as may enable us to take some rational view of their real nature. In seeking the solution of a most difficult problem in spiritual science, anything like dogmatism would be essentially incompatible with the nature of the inquiry. The wisest, not less than the weakest observer, should approach a subject of this quality with all becoming modesty, remembering that while

“ Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much,
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.”

A few critical observations may suffice to give our minds the right direction. In contributing my suggestions toward a philosophical exposition of the facts, I only presume to speak for myself and so many of my readers as may find their own ideas voiced in what I have yet to communicate.

As a further preliminary to the proposed analytical and philosophical exegesis of the facts under review, a brief statement of several methods whereby Spirits may and do reveal

their forms to our senses, will be of consequence in a more particular classification of the phenomena. One of the Spirits of "The Golden Age" defines philosophy to be "facts seen in their right relations." This is the way we would look at the facts in this case. How, then, do Spirits reveal their forms to us; and how do we perceive them? I apprehend by at least *four several methods*, which I will endeavor to briefly explain.

1. The conscious Spirit in the body has its external and internal channels of communication. The senses open outwardly through all the physical organs to the whole realm of external nature; and inwardly to the immeasurable sphere of all spiritual realities. As a rule, during the life on earth, the interior avenues of perception are closed, and men are blind on this spiritual side of their natures. But when—by the normal process of our spiritual growth or by other means—the dark curtains are removed from those windows of the soul which open toward the heavens, our interior being is illuminated. Then we see Spirits as they really exist in their own sphere; we see them as they see one another, and as naturally as we behold the objects of the material creation. The cases which answer to this description are never numerous. Society, whether savage or civilized, is too sensuous to discern spiritual things. The common life and thought of the people are too external to admit of the frequent development of such examples. *When, however, these interior avenues of perception are thus opened in a human being in this world, Spirits require no clothing of material elements to make their presence visible.* When the forms of Spirits are distinctly revealed to

us in this way, they appear to be in all respects as real as the most tangible bodies in this world ; and still there is no material substance in such a visible form that would arrest the motion of the most delicate chronometer. Spirits whose natures are refined, readily pass through closed doors ; and whenever they offer no voluntary resistance, very ponderable bodies may pass through them as through shadows, illuminated clouds, or the vapor from a steam-pipe. It will be perceived that when the senses are opened on the spiritual side of human nature, the appearance of Spirits in visible forms does not, to say the least, necessarily depend on any materializing process. If such examples are scarcely more numerous than summer flowers in wintry weather, they are not so rare as Christian charity.

2. It is to be observed that the mind—whether in or out of its earthly tabernacle—has power to present an endless succession of psycho-electrotypes, or psycho-physiological pictures, which have every appearance of outstanding realities. This is done by acting on the subtile agent that pervades the sensory nerves of the subject in such a way as to reflect an image upon the sensorium ; the process resembling that by which light throws up an image or picture of the object from which the rays are reflected on the sensitive plate in the camera. Doubtless all ordinary sensations result from a disturbance or excitation of the electrical aura of the nerves of general and special sensation, which is the vital motive power of animal and human bodies. It is a great mistake to suppose that these sensorial impressions can only be produced by *material means*, or the presence of the objective forms of the physical

world. This is ascribing to the elements of matter a preëminence over the faculties of the mind which I am not willing to concede. On the contrary, *it has been experimentally demonstrated that the various impressions—occasioned by the ordinary objects and agents of Nature—on and through the organs of sensorial perception, can be produced with similar precision and with equal force by the action of a positive mind on a sensitive subject.* A strong imagination and vigorous will may thus multiply the mental images of everything in Nature of which we may be able to form a definite conception. Every form that passes before the vision ; every sound that breaks the silence ; the aromatic flavors treasured up in the autumn fruits ; and every precious perfume that is borne on the “wings of the wind,” may all be made to come to us in the absence of the natural objects which contain these essential qualities—and all through the agency of the human mind, acting agreeably to psychophysiological laws on the subtile forces of the nervous system. All these effects have been produced in this way thousands of times, and they are daily repeated by minds in the body and in the spirit. Many cases of the alleged “materialization of Spirits” are obviously phenomena of this class. Under this psycho-sensorial operation what really appears to be a solid body may be merely *a sensation*, this impression of tangibility being made through the nerves on the sensorium.

3. This classification of the facts calls for specific mention of the examples of *transfiguration*. In these cases the Spirit takes such possession of the medium, as to change all the facial lines and the expression of every feature so completely that the medium seems to have disappeared and the spirit alone is

recognized.* In such examples the powers of the spirit are sometimes so great that with the transfiguration the subject is partially *transformed*. Daniel D. Home and several other mediums have—it is confidently affirmed—been made, at least apparently, much larger or smaller, and, by actual measurement, several inches shorter or taller, by this effort of the Spirit to represent its own earthly proportions. The facts of this class have often been the means of exposing honest mediums to unjust suspicions, from which they should be conscientiously defended. When the Spirit withdraws and the phenomena of transfiguration disappear, leaving the form, features and expression peculiar to the medium, *the observer who is mainly watching for some deception is liable to deceive himself and wrong the innocent object of his suspicion*. How much the indwelling spirit may change the form is suggested by these lines of the poet :

“ For of the soul the body form doth take,
For soul is form, and doth the body make.”

4. There is still another method by which a Spirit may become visible, regardless alike of all psychological powers and susceptibilities, and of the opening of the interior avenues of sensation. *He may attract to himself and condense about the spiritual body certain sublimated elements from the medium, from other human bodies and from the earth's atmosphere, so as to form a visible material covering, thus revealing the outlines of*

* The reader will find this class of spiritual phenomena freely and beautifully illustrated in the charming story from the German of Heinrich Zschokke, entitled “The Transfigurations.”

the spiritual presence to the natural senses of the observer. Precisely how much matter may be required in the production of such forms is a question we will not undertake to settle. It may be more or less, according to the measure of the Spirit's power, the proper materials at his command, and the results intended to be produced. But even the small substance of a summer cloud would be quite sufficient to render the Spirit visible to all observers. While such forms may be more substantial than the momentary spell of the psychologist, their superficial aspects do not enable us to determine either their chemical composition or their specific gravity. We know that at the pleasure of the Spirit such a form may be made to resist the contact of ponderable bodies and the action of physical forces; otherwise it may admit of being so penetrated that an arrow may pass through it as freely as it would make its way through the morning mist that hides the mountains.

Now would it be proper to say of an example belonging to this class that *the Spirit is materialized?* If the term is not applicable in this case it would seem to be out of place in any other. It must be obvious, I think, that when the Spirit becomes visible by the opening of the senses on the interior plane of perception; or the phenomena are produced by the Spirit acting on the sensory nerves of mortals, the case is never, in any philosophical sense, one of materialization. Does the term properly represent the facts which belong to the fourth division of this classification? the cases in which the Spirit is enrobed with material vestments? Let us see. According to Webster, to materialize is "to reduce to a state

of matter ;” “to regard as matter ;” “to consider or explain by the laws or principles of matter ;” “to cause to assume a character appropriate to material things.” Does the Spirit, *per se*, undergo any such change as is indicated by this comprehensive definition ? No. Is the Spirit reduced to a material state ? No. Is it to be regarded as matter ? No. Are its voluntary powers subordinated to the laws of matter ? No. Is it in a condition that its nature and functions must be explained on the principles of physics ? No. Is the character of the Spirit changed in any important particular, or are its attributes essentially modified ? I apprehend not. If, on the contrary, *the change is in matter*—if the Spirits develop the facts by their own subtile and powerful agency in directing the faculties of mind and the forces of the physical world, why should we infer that *the Spirit is materialized* ? This assumption is a significant indication of the tendency of the popular mind. It does not distinctly recognize Spirit as the active and controlling agent in this business. It is a virtual affirmation that the potencies of the Universe belong in a most essential sense to matter ; and that the Spirit is brought down from its own high estate to the lower level of material things. If the active forces employed in the production of the phenomena under discussion really belong to the Spirit-World, it would better accord with the intrinsic nature of the facts to say that *matter is spiritualized*.

But the facts carry along with them internal evidence that may aid us to settle the question. That they do not all belong to the same division of the foregoing classification must be obvious to the critical observer. Take the first example in

our statement of illustrative facts. The woman of Endor was a seeress. Either her spiritual vision was open, or a psychological image was presented. She distinctly saw and described the prophet. But Samuel was not visible to Saul. There was no image before the eyes of the king ; hence his inquiries, "What sawest thou?" and "What form is he of?" Had the Spirit extemporized a body from the elements it would have been equally manifest to Saul. But the king saw nothing, for the obvious reason that in this case there was no materialized body present. It was probably but a psycho-photograph of the prophet's likeness, made on the sensorium of the medium. It is worthy of observation that a residence in the Spirit-world had not diminished the respectful condescension of Samuel. He came promptly at the solicitation of a wicked king, and, as it would seem, to confirm the pretensions of an old woman whom the Church declares was in league with the devil.

The amazing revelation of the vast cloud of witnesses whose presence overshadowed the Hebrews in their contest with the Syrians, might, in these days, be regarded as a stupendous case of the "materialization of Spirits," at least by the earthly witnesses of their presence. And yet where is the evidence that a single Spirit of that innumerable host took on a material body to secure recognition, or for any other purpose. The analysis of the facts, however searching, will fail to discover any proof that the forms of those celestial warriors were fashioned from the grosser elements of this mundane sphere. At first only the prophet saw the Spirits. His sensitive soul appears to have been qualified to recognize the most sublimated forms and delicate influences. Through the open avenues of his

spiritual being all was revealed. To him the spiritual hosts which filled the aërial regions, and were present to champion his cause, were quite as real as the besieging army of the king of Syria. At length, in answer to the earnest prayer of the prophet, and in obedience to the coöperative influence of the Spirits, the prophet's servant had his inward vision opened, and then he, too, saw the same as his master. But it does not appear that the Syrians observed anything unusual. On the contrary, the evidence from the record is that *they saw nothing*; and so, in their blindness, were readily captured. Now if we suppose that the transmundane warriors extemporized material bodies for the occasion; each containing as much matter as Colonel Olcott says the materialized form of the Indian maiden, Honto, represented at Chittenden, when he weighed her on the platform scale; and estimating the superterrestrial army at say fifteen thousand, the materializing process would have required—in ponderable matter—*over five hundred and sixty-nine tons avoirdupois!* These figures damage if they do not demolish the materializing hypothesis, in its application to the facts of this particular class. In this grand exhibition of the powers of the other world—in which multitudes of Spirits are said to have been visible—we look in vain for any evidence of materialization, in any sense that corresponds to the common conception of our time.

The graphic description of the appearance of a Spirit—cited from the book of Job—though perhaps not the record of an actual occurrence (the book of Job is a fine dramatic poem), represents the experience of one partially entranced by the influence of a Spirit while in a natural sleep, and the conse-

quent imperfect development of his powers as a clear seeing medium. The nerves of general and special sensation are strongly exercised ; but the object presented to the vision is so obscure that the form of the Spirit is not clearly discerned. At the same time the Spirit's action on the auricular nerves is shown to be distinct and satisfactory, as appears from the impressive communication, which seems, at least, to find audible expression.*

When a Spirit wrote with a visible hand on the wall of Belshazzar's palace a prophecy of the division of his empire, it is said that the king saw the hand, and he also appears to have witnessed the execution of the writing. It does not appear that any other person in that large company saw the hand, though it may be fairly inferred that many of the wise men at his court had an opportunity to study the Spirit's chirograph. This is often referred to as a case of materialization. Had the phenomenon been of this class the hand would have been equally visible to every one of the thousand lords assembled at the royal banquet.

* The ancients seem to have comprehended the fact, that what appears to be an audible voice may really be *only a sensation* produced by a noiseless action of some invisible intelligence on the auditory nerves. When Cræsus, king of Lydia, determined to test the powers of the oracle of Apollo, he sent messengers to Delphi with explicit instructions concerning the questions to be submitted. The oracular responses through the Priestess—revealing with singular precision what the king was doing on a certain day—were uttered in hexameter verse, beginning in the following significant language :

“ I know the number of the sands, and the measure of the sea ; I know what the dumb would say ; *I hear him who speaks not.*” Cicero De Divinatione, Lib. I., xviii.

Jesus and his disciples who saw Moses and Elias were susceptible of spiritual influence, and they were evidently highly mediumistic. It was, therefore, possible for them to discern Spirits without the aid of any such reïncorporate process. So Jesus, after his crucifixion, might have readily reappeared to the familiar friends who had been so long and constantly under his influence. John the Revelator alone saw that elder prophet who inspired his visions, and whose visible presence the pious enthusiast was already to worship. Mohammed, Marcus Junius Brutus, Oliver Cromwell, Joan of Arc, and many others alone recognized their spiritual visitors. No one but the Seer himself saw the Spirit at the inn who reproved Swedenborg for rapid eating and overloading his stomach; and the friend who walked with the Baron at Cheapside discovered no image of Moses. When the devout Seeress of Prevorst beheld the illuminated Spirit of her minister, standing by the open grave, the other bystanders only saw his mortal remains. The huge animal form at the "Miracle Circle" was visible to no one, while—to the last degree—it was tangible to all. The Greek girl, though luminous as a star, never unveiled her immortal charms to the crowd. Stephen Dudley made himself visible to the writer and to one other observer; the four remaining individuals in the room at the time did not perceive the presence of this spiritual visitor. Perhaps the rule is that only one or two in a circle, or at most a limited number, have any such perception. The mass may neither see anything above the material sphere, nor otherwise perceive what is beyond the reach of ordinary sensation. In the phenomena I have thus briefly reviewed, and in all sim-

ilar examples, the internal evidence must determine the proper classification.

If it shall hereafter appear that the Spirits are not wholly or mainly dependent on gross matter as the means of demonstrating the fact of their existence, still, their presence in our midst, and their power over the elements of matter and the faculties of mind, will be none the less real. The facts are not less important if we adopt a philosophy which takes them out of the category of impossible miracles. *I neither dispute these facts nor question their value when I undertake to explain them with a due regard to the laws of both mind and matter, and in the light of a rational philosophy of our spiritual existence.* Many people presume because they see a form, or feel one, that for the time being impresses their senses as both visible and tangible, that there must be a complete human frame there, with all the natural organs and chemical constituents—flesh, blood, muscles, nerves, brains, bones, thoracic and abdominal viscera, tooth and nail, with all the animal secretions !

“ Oh Cæsar, these things are beyond all use ! ”

If it takes God twenty-five years to make such a human body, who will believe that the spirit of a North American Indian can do it in the twinkling of an eye ? Those who are credulous enough to really accept a theory that presumes human bodies to be so organized in an instant, ought not to stagger at Joshua's alleged successful interference with the movements of the heavenly bodies. Such people may accept the tricks of the juggler for what they seem ; and they ought to be prepared to listen with solemn faith and servile reverence to the apocryphal stories of all the pious enthusiasts who

ever lived. They have more confidence in the cunning and capacity of a mere magician than in the power and wisdom of Almighty God! These people deem it a waste of time to reason. They grapple with imaginary monsters, and swallow them whole. They feed on miracles with an omnivorous appetite until they lose all relish for probabilities, and at last come to believe chiefly in the impossible.

The Spirits seldom or never impress all the senses at the same time. Sometimes only the sense of feeling is appealed to, as when the writer was ordained by the imposition of invisible Spirit-hands. We often feel the presence of unseen human hands in our hands, on the head, face and different parts of the body, while nothing of the kind is visible. At other times the optical and auditory nerves, and the whole mechanism of the visual and auricular organs, are acted upon. Then Spirits become visible, and there are either voices in the air, or corresponding impressions on the sensorium. The immortals stand before us like other objective realities. They seem not only to have distinct outlines, personality and expression, but also to be ponderable, and to occupy space. It perhaps never occurs to us that the *image is in the mind*. Indeed, in all the phenomena of ordinary vision the images are always *subjective*; in other words, they are on the brain and in the mind. The only question to be settled in any case is, how are they produced—whether by the actual presence of physical forms, or by the action of the controlling intelligence on the subtile agent and organic instruments of sensation?

If when a Spirit appears there is really a complete corporeal body formed, as there seems to be, it would be equally visible

to all observers. When there is a rock, a log, a horse or a man in the highway, every traveler who has eyes may behold the object in the road—in the same form and with the concurrent circumstances of time and place. Moreover, when we see a material object before us, its presence may be still further demonstrated by the sense of touch in every individual. But in respect to the ocular perception of Spirits, this is neither always nor generally the fact, as we all know. In the ceremony of the new ordination the hand that pressed so heavily on the head was invisible. Nor were all the nerves of feeling subjected to the Spirit's action. The sensories of the right arm were not influenced in the least. When I attempted to seize the wrist, the hand closed on vacancy. When I attempted to grasp the invisible hand itself, I clutched my own hair. And still the heavy pressure remained on the cranium. I saw nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing, except the steady pressure of that muscular hand covering the coronal and the frontal portions of the brain. This seems to be demonstrative evidence that the operation on the part of that Spirit was confined in this case to the cerebrum, and without making the slightest impression elsewhere on any of the single or double sensory nerves. By the simple act of volition God's spiritual ministers come and go at pleasure. They touch me when and where they will; they play upon these nerves as on "a harp of a thousand strings;" I see them, and anon they are invisible; at one moment their presence is tangible, and, suddenly—they are gone, I know not whither; nor have I power to retain the offered hand

"When his fair Angels would salute my palm."

If the reader will recall and carefully analyze the experiences of the circles in which the presence of Spirits may have been seen and felt, he will be surprised to discover how large a proportion of them are of such a nature as to preclude the acceptance of any materialistic hypothesis. All such examples as do not admit of confirmation by the concurrent testimony of at least two senses—feeling and sight—must be ruled out of the category of materializations. Every form or substance that is dense enough to be *felt*, may also be *seen*; and whenever either the visible or tangible form can not be both seen and felt at the same time, the observer may safely conclude that the matter must be all in his eye or imagination, and would not turn the scales of the apothecary against one grain of mustard seed.

The history and poetry of the early nations furnish impressive illustrations of the subject. The Spirits which appeared to mortals more than three thousand years ago do not appear to have been reincarnated. The classic reader may recall the experience of the hero of the *Æneid*. After betraying the cause of the Trojans, and deserting their city—leaving his companion behind in his flight—he returns once more, under cover of darkness, to inspect the melancholy scene, and to search among the ruins of Troy for his beloved Creusa.* He seeks the gates, and threads his way, “by the light of the flames.” He visits the citadel, and wanders among the wasted treasures of temples

* The traditional history of *Æneas* leaves the reader in doubt about many things. The poets do not entertain the idea that he betrayed the Trojans, but they maintain that the Greeks became masters of the city by stratagem.

and palaces. The voice of his lamentation breaks the silence ; and the Poet makes Æneas say :

“ I have filled the streets with my cry ! ”

At length the shade of his lost Creusa appears to him, and endeavors to soothe his immoderate grief. Thrice Æneas attempts to embrace the visible form that stands before him ; but his arms encircle no tangible object. Every time he essays to fold her to his bosom she eludes his grasp, even as “ light winds ” and “ fleeting dreams ” escape. *

But I may be told that I am reasoning against some of the more important illustrations of materialization. Did not Col. Olcott deliberately—more than once—weigh the materialized body of the Indian maiden Honto, at Chittenden, and thus establish the fact of the specific gravity of her body ? Did he not thus demonstrate the truth, beyond rational controversy, that the visible form did actually weigh from fifty-eight to eighty-eight pounds—according to the varying degrees of materialization, or the condensation of the earthly substances employed in the process ? Are we to dishonor the testimony of Mr. Olcott ; or did the scales lie ? We are not left to either alternative as a final conclusion. I accept the testimony of the Colonel to the facts, *but not his inferences* ; and I shall by no means impeach the scales. The question concerning the weight of the Indian girl’s body can not be finally decided on such evidence. The Spirit might have turned the balance at the same figures, and just as easily, without stepping on the platform of the scales at all. This has virtually been done

* The reader is referred to the Second Book of Virgil’s Æneid.

thousands of times. There is not a fact in Spiritualism more clearly demonstrated than the power of Spirits to apparently increase or diminish the specific gravity of animate and inanimate objects. If a grand piano can be lifted by Spirits, it may also be held down by the same agency, and with an equal force in addition to the full weight of the instrument. Small tables are held down with a force and firmness so irresistible that a strong man can not lift them; and many tables have been pulled in pieces in the vain attempt to raise them from the floor in opposition to the voluntary action of the Spirits.

But the table *per se*, really weighs no more when some spirit or mortal is holding it down. There are no visible or tangible materialized bodies on the tables to hold them down; and no such forms under them to hold them up. In the one case—when they rise—the Spirits do not take the ponderable substance out of such objects; and in the other—when they are held down—they do not put any additional material elements into them to increase their weight. *They simply exert a voluntary force against the operation of the physical law.* These effects may be just as well produced on a platform scale as on a table. What, then, becomes of the assumed gravity of the whole *matter* in the case of the Indian maid? It is not necessary for the Spirit to stand on the platform to turn the scale. She may be somewhere else, and do it quite as well, and vary her apparent weight at will, as the facts prove. What, then, is the truth of the matter in respect to the weight of Honto? Why, there may be *no matter*, in or about her, more ponderable than common air.

The same power may be exerted on the medium. Charles W. Lawrence, with whom the writer experimented for several

months, many years ago, afforded a very striking illustration of the subject. His normal weight was only about one hundred and twenty-five pounds; but when the Spirits held him down the united strength of two of the most powerful athletes could not lift him. He seemed to be riveted to the floor. The influence of the Spirits on Lawrence appeared to affect him as anger did a certain man who swore that *when he was mad he weighed a ton!**

In the cabinet manifestations the conditions imposed upon the spectator are generally such as to admit of the possible practice of some deception. At Chittenden the freedom of the investigator had its limitations. These are shown, by "People from Another World," to have been of such a nature as to excuse a rational skepticism. Honto has Colonel Olcott's certificate that she is a genuine spirit from another world; and we know nothing to the contrary. But if while she is materialized the Indian girl can dance a hornpipe, permit a mortal to hold her hand, feel her pulse, listen to the beating of her heart; and still not lose her hold on the elements of the improvised body; it will of course puzzle both our physical and metaphysical philosophers to conceive of a rational reason why the same spirit may not conduct the entire proc-

* Among all the persons whom I have ever known Mr. Lawrence had acquired the greatest voluntary power over sensation in himself and the involuntary organic functions of his body. By an effort of his will he could produce a temporary paralysis of the sensory nerves in his limbs, so that piercing him with pins and needles did not occasion the slightest pain. He could also retard and accelerate his pulse at pleasure, and entirely suspend the heart's action by the force of his will. This he did repeatedly in the presence of many physicians, who certified to the fact before large public assemblies.

ess of materialization in the immediate presence of the spectators in some other part of the room, and without the screen of the cabinet. The writer has no disposition to be hypercritical, or to indulge in unjust suspicions of persons when the evidence is inconclusive. It was Bacon who observed that "Suspicions among thoughts are like bats among birds, which ever fly by twilight." When more light is wanted, let us be generous and give the medium the benefit of every doubt. Whenever the phenomena are real (as no doubt they are in many cases), and the forms are both visible and tangible at the same time, *and alike to all observers, it must be evident that the Spirit is clothed with material vestments.*

Many Spiritualists who ridicule the doctrine of the resurrection of the physical body still believe that almost any Spirit may at will be temporarily reïncarnated in a most literal sense. It is all the process of one minute ! Such a lively and all-embracing faith is rather calculated to put the believers in biblical miracles to shame. Such amazing faith was never found in the old Israel, nor anywhere else, unless it be among the willing disciples of Art Magic. I am little disposed to dogmatize about what the Spirits may, or may not, be able to do ; but in any case which involves the exercise of extraordinary powers, I think it wise to wait for demonstrative evidence. If such corporeal bodies as the writer and his readers possess to-day were really formed and suddenly vacated, there is every reason to presume that they would remain, like any other human form, and be subject to the laws which govern the natural chemistry of decay. A sudden disturbance of the circle would cause a Spirit to leave abruptly. The Spirit is

human, and in such a case would no more stand on the order of his going than we should do under like circumstances. If determined to leave on the instant, is it likely that he would ever trouble himself about his cast-off garments? No; never! If anything like a corporeal body had been formed, it would surely be left behind. But we are told that the Spirits disorganize and dissipate their bodies! Is it possible? And when was a human Spirit ever known to vaporize his earthly tabernacle when he moved out? If Spirits can do this for themselves, we can see no reason why they may not do it for their mortal kindred. This would at once dispose of the cremation question, and save the enormous expense of fashionable funerals. I assume nothing, but I have an abiding conviction that no Spirit of a man ever left his *organization* without some one discovering a corpse.

Samuel did not leave so much as a thread of his mantle at Endor, when he vanished from the royal presence of Saul. Moses and Elias disappeared from Mount Tabor just after the transfiguration, but they appear to have left no perishable remains to speak of. The last time Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, it is said that having led them out to Bethany, he was in the act of invoking a blessing upon his followers, when he "was parted from them," and they saw him no more. Another biographer, of more imaginative mind, says "a cloud received him out of their sight." We read of no funeral at Bethany about that time, probably for the reason that Jesus' resurrected and materialized body was nowhere to be found. And those departed saints who reappeared in considerable numbers at the crucifixion, and

were observed walking about Jerusalem—not one of them required an undertaker.* And yet it is reasonable to suppose that if their own material bodies had been reconstructed, or others made like them, they would have inevitably followed the universal law in their decomposition. But the Spirits who come to us, and cause their presence to be seen and felt, leave no such bodies when they go. When the volition of the Spirit so determines, he is not here—he goes elsewhere, and *his body is nowhere*. They come when they will; they remain as long as they are disposed to keep our company; they leave at pleasure, without opening material doors; but they never leave a subject for the dissecting table, nor the aroma of the charnel houses to remind us that a human soul has departed.

Here I must take leave of the subject, though it opens into other and wider fields. In conclusion, I may be permitted to add that phenomena presenting all the superficial aspects of those which I have reviewed may be and frequently are produced by Spirits in the body. Apparitions of the living are numerous, and they may be multiplied at will. *Spirits in the flesh may not only make their presence felt at great distances; but they may also act on the nerves of special sensation, so as to appear to clothe themselves with visible forms.* This is demonstrated by numerous facts and experiments, and these effects may be, and often are, psychologically produced. The forms may be either larger or smaller than natural, agreeably to the conception and desire of the controlling intelligence. In the language of the poet :

* See Matthew's record of the Gospel, chap. xxvii. 52, 53.

“ Thus incorporeal Spirits to smaller forms
Reduce their shapes immense.”

The method of producing these effects may be clearly explained, and the power acquired by proper instruction and practice. All this can be done in the absence of elementary spirits ; the magic wand of the sorcerer is not required ; without invoking the shade of Cornelius Agrippa, and without either celestial magic or the black art. This is not the appropriate field for the growth of foul superstitions, but rather for the golden fruits of the grandest science. There are earnest and aspiring souls whose common law is progress. Emerging from the darkness of the past, they look with prescient vision into the Future for light. These have a taste for diviner things to which we would reverently minister. And so we abandon the ancient superstitions and turn our backs on the buried past. We leave the ruined fanes of polytheistic worship, the polluted shrines of fallen gods, and the society of all the puny godlings born of the diseased imagination. Those who prefer such society may

—“ mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps.”

The modern magicians, the black art professors, and all the little jugglers who clothe their personations of Spirits with false faces and robes of York Mills muslin, are left to pursue their work of deception. We have only the most distant fellowship with such people. When knaves and fools behind the visor hide, we need not go to the masquerade. Let us dispense with the witches' cauldron and its deadly contents. We leave the bubbling hell-broth, described in Macbeth, to

those who have an appetite for such infernal compounds, whilst we study the principles of a purer faith and worship ; a science that admits of no unholy alliance with superstition, and that divine philosophy which is

—“ the Patriarch’s ladder, reaching Heaven,
And bright with beckoning Angels.”

Time and distance can not separate souls. It is only lack of affinity that constitutes distance. The conditions of time and space belong in no essential sense to the Spirit-world. Mortal restraints and limitations have no place in the higher life. Such is the certain and irresistible gravitation in that world that no earthly bars can ever separate kindred spirits. Though on opposite sides of the globe, or far away in distant Spheres, they may meet and embrace one another. Oceans and mountains, long ages and immeasurable spaces may intervene, and yet each be conscious of the essential presence of the other. There may be sensible contact and a real inter-communication of human faculties, affections, emotions and aspirations. Whether in or out of the body, the willing and loving spirit may come to us in answer to our silent prayer, and we be made to realize its presence through all the quickened senses of the soul.

“ Far off their home may be,
Beneath the glory of some Eastern sky,
Or where bright isles amid blue waters lie ;
And thou may’st no more see
The forms which were their Spirits’ earthly shrine,
But, oh ! *if thou wilt have them, THEY ARE THINE !*”

BELVIDERE, WARREN CO., N. J., }
June 16, 1880. }

THE MATERIALIZATION QUESTION.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JULY 3, 1880.

THE article entitled "Our Spiritual Guests" contains the text of a discourse delivered before the Conference in Brooklyn. It has been employed as a pretext for much unfriendly criticism and hostility to the work of the Editor-at-Large and his friends. It has thus become so intimately identified with the history of this enterprise that it seemed necessary to give it a place in this volume. The spirit of the opposition excited by its delivery and, more especially, by the author's acceptance of the office of Chief of the Secular Press Bureau will be readily apprehended by the reader of the Appendix to this volume. I have introduced two or three additional illustrative facts and references, and have also been a little more explicit in the statement of the points which were liable to be misunderstood.

It is necessary to mention the fact that several passages contained in the original manuscript were omitted in the delivery of the lecture, for want of time and for other reasons. Here and there the phraseology has been modified to adapt it to the press; but *the essential principles all remain; nor has any specific view, doctrine or illustration inculcated from the platform been changed by this revision.* The intelligent reader will at once perceive that the particular observations which have so of-

fended the scribes *were made in reference to three of the four classes of facts comprehended in our specification, and which the writer has shown, not only by his analysis and classification, but by internal evidence derived from the facts themselves, were not examples of materialization, though they are so regarded by ordinary observers.*

The views entertained are my own, and the freedom of their expression is no occasion for apology. They were not at first given to the public in my capacity of Editor-at-Large ; and no one is expected to share the responsibility of their utterance. That they will be cordially accepted by all minds I have perhaps no reason to expect. No favor is asked except a careful reading and a candid judgment. I neither claim infallibility in anything, nor immunity from just criticism. It is further proper to observe that my convictions may be modified by future experience and further reflection. I am not uneasy about the acceptance of any views peculiar to myself. If I am right in the main, the opinions expressed will obtain confirmation ; if I am in error—on any questions of consequence involved in the general subject—I shall doubtless be corrected in due time ; but never by those impetuous and imperious critics who chiefly arrest public attention by their readiness to throttle other investigators at the very threshold of this inquiry. Whether these people can or can not agree with the writer, is of no possible consequence to any one. Indeed complete unanimity of opinion, on this or any other subject, is neither possible nor desirable. Whoever wants to stifle independent thought would render the utterances of all men but empty echoes of a single voice !

But it is very evident that we are much in need of the *oneness* described by Paul—"THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE." This is of the most vital importance to us all. Let us, therefore, practice a becoming moderation, and learn to tolerate the honest convictions of all men in the genuine spirit of charity. The true philosopher will treat the views of all other men with becoming consideration. He is always sparing of censure and he seldom engages in partisan strifes. There is a divinity in *Peace*, to which all pure souls are responsive ;

" And, when LOVE speaks, the voice of all the gods
Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony."

S. B. B.

A TWILIGHT MEDITATION.

BY S. B. BRITTAN.

I TARRY long and joy to hear,
From happy voices, far and near,
That darkest shadows of the Night,
Like shapeless phantoms, take their flight
In the fair Morning light.

The way was dark, and rugged too,
Up mountain heights from which to view
The Star-land of the Wise, who must
While living love, and work, and trust,
With gentle souls and just.

I travel on my lonely way,
And, musing at the close of day,
Recall the scenes when life was new,
And dearest forms now lost to view,
Where life and love are true.

The sylvan aisles are silent where
 Soft music voiced the vibrant air ;
 The falling leaves are brown and sere,
 And autumn days of life are here,
 With mem'ries sad and dear.

The early Summer birds have flown
 To fair and sunny lands unknown ;
 While music from some higher sphere
 Comes softly to the souls that hear,
 When Angels hover near.

The singing birds in woodland bowers,
 Returning with the early flow'rs,
 Will cheer the passing hours—
 While ministries of Sun and Rain
 Bring to the valley and the plain
 The perished life again.

I linger where the shadows fall,
 Beneath a cypress-shaded wall
 Of a deserted hall;
 And voices of the loved once more
 Recall the happy days of yore—
 From their immortal shore.

In looking through the veil of Time,
 To fairer skies in worlds sublime,
 I hear the pleasant chime
 Of joy-bells where there is no Night,
 And happy faces, calm and bright,
 Shine in the blessed light.

29 BROAD STREET, NEWARK, N. J., }
 March, 1882. }

APPENDIX A.

REPLY TO HON. THOMAS R. HAZARD.

REVIEW OF THE CRITICS AND THE SITUATION.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JULY 10, 1880.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I N the *Banner of Light* of the date of the 26th inst. I find a letter from THOMAS R. HAZARD, in which that gentleman refers to the report of my Brooklyn lecture on "Form Materialization," and respectfully calls upon me to "lay before the readers of the *Banner* a true statement of the views" which I do entertain and did express—very imperfectly no doubt—in my lecture before the "Spiritual Fraternity." In respect to the chief purpose of your correspondent's letter, I have anticipated the request of this invincible champion of Spiritualism, by having already placed in your hands for publication the complete text of my lecture, with such further illustrative facts and explanatory observations as the nature of the case seemed to demand. I trust that I have been sufficiently explicit to guard against future misunderstanding, and that the spirit of the whole may further realize the wishes of the distinguished friend who has been pleased to call me to account for "evasive language and unbecoming personalities." It will be perceived by all who will take the time to peruse my exposition, that my method of handling a difficult question is anything but "evasive";

and that *I have not*—to borrow the terms of less friendly critics—*“dodged the question.”*

I see no reason why equal and exact justice should not be meted out to all men ; and whatever I claim for myself I demand with no less emphasis in behalf of the humblest disciple in our ranks. Your correspondent is, I must suppose, aware of the fact that I am arraigned without ceremony before the bar of public opinion, and directly accused of several offenses against the truth and the integrity of my relations to the Spiritual Brotherhood. Let us briefly recall some of the counts in this indictment. Here are the principal charges :

1. That I am trying to organize another sectarian institution which may retard the genuine progress and damage the future prospects of Spiritualism.
2. That I do not really believe in the most important facts of Spiritualism ; that I have publicly denied the reality of the same, and especially the power of the Spirits to compel the recognition of their presence by the manifestation of visible and tangible forms.
3. That I am trying to hold on to the name and form of Christianity from selfish motives ; and that in this respect my pretensions are a hollow “sham . . . that deceives nobody.”
4. That my “Spiritualism is blighted, dead with the dry-rot of aping respectability.”
5. It is charged that I “dogmatically dictate to Spiritualists what they are to believe and disbelieve.”
6. It is presumed that I may have stigmatized—at least by implication—all who do not adopt my views on the materialization question as either knaves or fools.

Now if the accused may be supposed to have any rights in this case, I may be permitted to say that *I have never, at any time, even attempted to do any one of the things here specified.* It is to be regretted that many people are disposed to infer that personal

charges, when not contradicted, may be presumed to be true. While in the interest of truth, and for the sake of my friends, I am constrained to dispute each and every one of the foregoing charges, it gives me great pleasure to pardon the authors of this unseemly exhibition of childish feeling and unprovoked hostility. So long as we mind our own business, conscientiously perform the appointed duty of the hour, and never meddle with the affairs of others, we need not be angered because some uneasy and contentious spirit drops a sheep-skin gauntlet in our path. Such people can not greatly ruffle the even current of our life.

“The blood more stirs
To rouse a lion, than to start a hare.”

Not knowing how many turbulent spirits were waiting for an opportunity to bring a railing accusation against me, I did not think it necessary to publicly refer—in any unfavorable manner—to the report of my Brooklyn lecture. Omitting to do this, it is presumed that I accept the exact terms of that report as my own. The facts justify no such inference. Every one at all familiar with journalism will readily perceive that in making a brief synopsis of a discourse which occupies at least an hour in the delivery, it is utterly impossible to give the speaker's language. On this point no evidence is required except such as the nature of the case affords. If the facts are that the lecture, printed *in extenso*, would fill a page of this paper, and yet the report is to be compressed into much less than a single column, it ought to be self-evident to the dullest comprehension, that *the reporter can not record the exact language of the speaker*. If the critic can do this, he may next time put his bushel of small potatoes into a peck measure and have space to spare for other purposes. Nothing can be more preposterous than the proposition to hold the speaker responsible for the precise terms of such a report. Mr. Hazard had the sagacity to see this, and the

politeness to qualify his own critical observations by the implied admission that the report may not clearly and fully represent the views expressed in the Brooklyn lecture. The most that any reporter—however qualified for his appropriate work—can be expected to do in such a case, is to give the public some intelligible idea of the drift of the speaker's thought, with perhaps an incomplete representation of the method of his argument, the general course of illustration, and the ultimate conclusion. This is what Mr. S. B. Nichols attempted to do with a conscientious regard for the truth; and he succeeded about as well as those who make reporting a profession.

My inquisitorial censors, intent upon convicting me of some misdemeanor, seized on certain passages in the report with the manifest purpose of making it appear that I do not believe Spirits have the power of making their forms visible and tangible to mortals. Yet, in that same report, I am credited with saying: "*Spirits have come to me in broad daylight, spoken to me, taken me by the hand, and manifested themselves in countless ways; history, sacred and profane, is full of similar examples.*" Now while I did not employ the exact terms attributed to me in this case, I certainly did say much to the same purpose. If this passage has any significance whatever, *it certainly means that I did affirm, most positively, my faith in the ability of Spirits to reveal themselves to both sight and touch.* My lecture was written out; and are my thoughts so loosely conceived and carelessly expressed as to warrant the presumption that I contradicted myself in the same lecture? Why, then, was the passage I have emphasized not used by those conscientious critics to qualify the apprehended meaning of the other? Plainly because *such a qualification was not wanted.* It would have defeated the obvious intention of the censors, who, *per saltum*, had reached the only conclusion which favored the determination to limit my personal influence and destroy my public

usefulness in the capacity of Editor-at-Large. It was a foregone conclusion that I must be found guilty at least of some breach of decorum. Several parties—all of whom shall be nameless in this connection—have assisted in this unrighteous crusade by unworthy appeals to popular prejudices. Indeed, after I had disclaimed the views and purposes attributed to me, in public statements over my own proper signature, these hypercritical censors were not satisfied, but with a shameless pertinacity *still insisted that I did express the views and doctrines I have repudiated.** I forbear to characterize this audacious spirit as it deserves. Among well-bred gentlemen of course each is allowed to define his own position, on any and every controverted question, and no one presumes to dispute the truth of his statements.

Several correspondents of certain Spiritual papers, and some of the editorial writers for the same, complain of my excessive egotism, exhibited in the unwarrantable assumption of power in presuming, as Editor-at-Large, to represent the ideas and interests of any other Spiritualist in the world. The truth is we have assumed nothing, except the right to labor peaceably, and without molestation, in the field to which we have been called by the Spirit-world and the expressed desire of many of the most enlightened Spiritualists in the country. If we have managed to devote, here and there, one, two, or more columns of some influential secular paper, to a just representation of the righteous claims of Spiritualism and its friends, are our labors in this direction to be considered *an offense* against those who not only contribute nothing to the work, but are most industrious in throwing obstacles in its way? Are the enlightened and noble men and women, who have generously contributed a small fund to enable the writer to labor for a season in

* It will be observed that my amiable critics were not present when the lecture was delivered, and not one of them ever saw a single paragraph of its contents before venturing on a free expression of his views of the whole matter.

this important field, to be periodically and forever told that they have made a grave mistake in wasting their means on an unworthy person and a useless enterprise? Are these shallow pretenders to a love of truth and to freedom of thought the only people who have any rights which others are bound to respect? And is there to be no end to this unmeasured insolence? If in the contributions to the secular press there is an unwarrantable assumption of power, on the part of the present writer, are those gentlemen less presumptuous who once a week fill a whole paper ostensibly for the same object? Yet the public is expected to infer that the delicate sensibilities and supreme modesty of certain correspondents and other journalistic writers have been fearfully shocked by our amazing self-assertion. Those gentlemen have lectured us on delicacy and propriety until we have been ready to exclaim :

“ Did ever raven sing so like a lark ! ”

After all this we may be fairly authorized to infer that our self-appointed censors do not presume to speak for any one but themselves. No; not for their patrons. That would be a violation of their principles, and they are too modest to be guilty of the smallest usurpation or improper exercise of power. How they shrink from prerogatives is a conundrum we cannot guess. But there is something very lovely in humility! Dickens has drawn and immortalized the character in his *David Copperfield*. Some of the recent actors may be overdoing the *rôle*; but that is small cause for censorious criticism when humility is constitutional. Verily, your journalistic Uriah must be “ the humblest person going.”

But if these humble people, who put their superior modesty in the papers, do not presume to speak for any one but themselves, what interest can the people be expected to have in their public labors? If it is indeed true that they shrink from the responsibility of representing anybody else, the fact should be known, that the Spiritual

public may understand and sufficiently admire these modest writers on the great themes of phenomenal Spiritualism and journalistic propriety. They labor early and late ; they go to their work in the morning ; and they consume the midnight petroleum before they retire. They keep on talking all the while, not because they have any ambitious desire to voice the current thought of the people, or ever expect to illustrate the ideas of the living age. They are too humble to indulge in such aspirations. Not for these ignoble ends do they live, and move, and have their being—speak and write, print and sell their papers—no, never ; but *for the supreme pleasure of hearing themselves converse*. What amazing diffidence and self-abnegation !

That the charges herein reviewed are not only thoroughly personal and absolutely unfounded, but characterized by a feeling that is hostile to every principle of reciprocal justice and spiritual fraternity, must be evident to every honest mind. It is no less a self-evident fact, that an answer to these, or any similar charges, to be at all pertinent, must also, *ex necessitate*, assume a personal character. At the same time, I am not prepared to plead guilty to the charge of using "*unbecoming personalities*." To fairly decide the question of what is, and what is not, becoming in any given case, all of the facts and circumstances must be fairly weighed. When one is arraigned for any crime or misdemeanor, he is not expected to weaken his defense to save the sensibilities of his accusers. He is never required to look after their reputation for fair and honorable dealing, if the case breaks down for want of evidence to sustain the charge. Your honorable correspondent—if I am not mistaken—has had experience as a legislator. I am sure he respects the truth, and I have faith in his own high sense of justice. If he will carefully examine all the facts, I will have no hesitation in resting this particular question—with a wise reference to the merits of the case—on his own final judgment. I am greatly

mistaken, or it will be found, on a searching and candid revision of the whole matter, that I have used no terms which, if employed in debate, would have subjected me to a call to order before any deliberative assembly in the world. Shall we have peace, and when?

With a profound respect for your correspondent and every honest seeker after truth, I have the honor to remain,

Yours faithfully,

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE, WARREN CO., N. J., }
June 24, 1880. }

REJOINDER TO THOMAS R. HAZARD.

OUR FINAL ANSWER TO OUR REVIEWER.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, OCT. 16, 1880.

“ Never came Reformation in a flood
 With such a heady current, scouring faults.”

—*Shakespeare.*

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

IT was on the 16th of June last that I forwarded to your office for publication my analysis and exposition of several classes of facts, all of which are now indiscriminately regarded by many persons as examples of “ the materialization of Spirit-forms.” My views had been perversely misrepresented ; and with a persistency for which I could recall no precedent from my early experience in a sectarian church. My object in thus publishing the views which had already been embodied in a written lecture—originally delivered in Republican Hall, New York, and subsequently in Brooklyn—was to satisfy the honest inquiries of many friends, and to place myself before the public in my own proper position. My

article, entitled "Our Spiritual Guests," had not appeared, but the complete manuscript of the same was in your office, when—in your issue of June 26th—you published a letter from Mr. °Thomas R. Hazard, which seemed, at least, to have been intended to provoke an unpleasant, personal controversy with the undersigned. In that letter the gentleman from Rhode Island indulged in a spirit of unjust animadversion in commenting on my answer to a correspondent whose captious criticism had been published in the Chicago paper.

In Mr. Hazard's letter, now under review, he insists that he is one of many whom "Dr. B., if correctly reported, . . . charges by implication as being either a fool or a knave;" and he also affirms that I have "stigmatized as tricksters" "scores of the instruments of the angels." It is with a feeling of sorrow that I am constrained—in the interest of truth, and in simple justice to myself—to say that *these statements were then, and they are now, utterly destitute of the smallest foundation in anything I have either written or otherwise expressed in my intercourse with the public.* It is no fault of mine that I am summoned here to impeach the testimony of a too anxious witness for the prosecution, whose many years should have taught him to weigh his own words, and to preserve a decent respect for those who may honestly dissent from his dogmatic conclusions on a question—*not of fact, but of philosophy.* In that letter your correspondent called upon me in a rather peremptory manner to "lay before the readers of the *Banner of Light* a true statement of the views he [I] did express in the lecture before the Brooklyn Spiritual Fraternity." The dictatorial spirit of the writer was rendered still more apparent and offensive by his admonishing me to "abstain as far as possible from the use of evasive language and unbecoming personalities;" and further, by his directing me—as one might instruct his own servant—to "use the language only suitable to

the dignity of his [my] new and responsible position of Editor-at-Large."

As already observed, before this letter was published, or I had received any intimation of the explicit instructions which were then ready to be made public—for no apparent purpose but my individual guidance, except to preöccupy and prejudice the public mind—*I had actually finished the work assigned me, and it was in your possession.* This will enable the reader to perceive that the entire freedom from "evasive language" and the absence of "unbecoming personalities" in my exposition are facts which can not be attributed to the influence of instructions I had not then received, and in which, it will be observed, Mr. Hazard's language is scarcely less imperious than the short method of a sight draft or the terms of a military order.

To this most unbecoming epistle I answered—in the *Banner of Light* of July 10th—and in a manner which I am sure every candid person must regard as exceedingly temperate and conciliatory, passing over the writer's offensive speech and supercilious tone in the interest of peace and fraternity. Both the temper and terms of my reply were altogether friendly to Mr. Hazard. But the respectful language in which I reasoned the case, and appealed to his own sense of justice, made no impression on the mind of the man who had called for the publication of my lecture, *not because he wanted information on that subject, or had any disposition to treat my opinions with respect; but for the obvious reason that he had determined to find a pretext for a long, aimless and useless discussion.* My views had been somewhat elaborately set forth in the article on "Our Spiritual Guests," and there I had determined to let the whole matter rest. With all due respect—and remembering that time is valuable and life is short—I had never for one moment contemplated anything so fruitless, dreary and prospectively interminable as a controversy with Mr. Hazard on the subject

of his choice. I have never invited him to any such discussion, and am obliged to respectfully decline his own most persuasive invitations. Should he resolve to go on with his battle, I shall be most happy to give him the whole field for the display of his prowess, and leave him all the glory which a Quixotic ambition may hope to achieve.

That Mr. Hazard was impatient for such a contest was rendered still more apparent from his letter which appeared in the succeeding number of the *Banner of Light* (date of July 17th). Referring to two of my articles, which he proposed to criticise in due time, he thus continued :

“I would feel obliged if Dr. Brittan would favor me (through the post-office) with the original manuscript in which he intimates in his last article his ‘lecture was written out,’ pledging myself to return it to him in a short time after I receive it. I am impressed that with the aid of this document I could obtain sufficient light to greatly simplify the matters in controversy. I would also be greatly obliged to Dr. Brittan if he would write out in a condensed form (as I suggested in my previous letter) the names of the materializing mediums through whose instrumentality he has obtained his knowledge of the great and advanced phenomena of Form Materialization, together with a succinct narrative of some of the manifestations that have occurred in his presence.”

To the letter from which the preceding paragraph is copied I have hitherto made no reply. I may here observe that the *animus* of this passage is too manifest to admit of any disguise. The first part contains a sly but deliberate intimation that my views, as published in the *Banner of Light*, on the subject of materialization, are not really my views at all ; that they are very different from the doctrines expressed in my lecture. In other words, that as a writer for the press I take occasion to contradict the views and opinions which I inculcate from the platform. Perhaps your correspondent did not know that this insinuation not only lacks the grace of common politeness, but that it is too absurd to require

serious notice. In the absence of any motive for so doing no man who is not a lunatic could be made to believe that I am at work to disprove my own convictions.

In the same connection Mr. Hazard proceeds "as one having authority" to assign me my task. He would have "the names of all the materializing mediums" in whose presence I have pursued my investigations, "together with a succinct narrative of some of the manifestations." Of course, in so far as the facts chanced to deviate from the line of the gentleman's experience he would naturally demand corroborative evidence. To authenticate everything to the satisfaction of one who believes in the infallibility of the vision of unlimited faith—while he has little knowledge of the laws of mind, and, apparently, less respect for the reason of the race—it might be necessary to send abroad for witnesses, and to collect and publish extensive memoranda ; and, after all, it is not likely that the views of your venerable correspondent would be modified in the smallest degree.

Here let me say that my experience in the observation of Spirit-forms covers a period of *thirty-four years*, and to do any kind of justice to the work which the gentleman calls on me to perform—for the small purpose of his own personal gratification—would occupy all my time for two or three months. Now I can not regard this call from South Portsmouth, R. I., imperative as it is, as the voice of divine Providence which every minister of the everlasting Gospel should reverently obey. Nor is this the *vox populi* on which time-servers wait with earnest attention. *No ; it is only one man who speaks.* Solitary and alone, of his own free will and pleasure, Brother Hazard summons me to this work, *to further his own private aims ;* and it is hardly creditable to his sense of justice that he does not propose to make any provision for my mortal necessities while engaged in his service. As I am just now employed, and can not leave my duties to be discharged by

another, let those bid for the contract who enjoy the fellowship of the "Scribes and Pharisees"; of whom it was said by a noble Spiritual Reformer—they "*compass sea and land to make ONE PROSELYTE.*" (Matt. xxiii. 15.)

The gentleman from Rhode Island assigned the following as his reason for demanding my original manuscript: "*I am impressed that with the aid of this document I could obtain sufficient light to greatly simplify the matters in controversy.*" Bearing in mind the fact that I was not engaged in a discussion with Mr. Hazard, and did not propose to have any controversy with him, either on materialization or any other subject, the reader will recognize the inverted sense of modesty that prompted the offer of his services in so simplifying my obscure utterances that they may be understood by ordinary mortals. It may be proper to observe, in this connection, that I had never before been admonished that I was in need of the benevolent offices of any one in this capacity. Moreover, if it was indeed necessary—in order to dissipate the fog that is presumed to envelop the expression of my ideas—that some one should be employed to simplify the method of their statement; to explain the "true inwardness" of the letter and the form; or perhaps *to put some new meaning into the same which the author never dreamed of*, it may still occur to the mind of the considerate reader that even eminent authorities lose nothing by graceful condescension, and that the writer's privilege should have been recognized in the choice of the party to fill this place. But he was neither interviewed on the subject, nor permitted to have any voice in the matter. Mr. Hazard—waiving all unnecessary ceremony—offered himself for the office, and the same party, with great unanimity, elected the candidate. While we failed to discover the necessity for his services, and omitted to entertain him in his new capacity, he, nevertheless, made haste to enter upon the work set before him. In his own peculiar analysis and interpretation of the writer's

article on Our Spiritual Guests, your readers will have witnessed the surprising result of his first effort in the simplification of our ideas.

Now I do not propose to go meandering after Mr. Hazard all the way over his tortuous course. I should as soon think of following the shade of Moses along the crooked line of his march through the Egyptian wilderness. On the contrary, I only design to glance at him, here and there, to illustrate the amazing method by which he simplifies my views on the materialization question. Perhaps I may be expected, *in transitu*, to express my thanks for such immense publicity as your correspondent has been pleased to give me. He devotes nearly *twelve columns* of your space to his review, or almost double the room required by Our Spiritual Guests. I find in addition to *twenty-two* references to the "Professor, " Doctor," and "Editor-at-Large," that the gentleman from Rhode Island repeats my name—or uses the initial with one title or another, *one hundred and twenty-four times*. Verily—if never before—now, surely, our name must be "a household word," far and wide as your illuminated *Banner* is unfurled. If I am not greatly elated on this occasion, it may be for the reason that I am not easily deceived. Beneath the superficial aspects of this unusual distinction I recognize the purpose of the writer. My cognomen is chiefly used by Mr. Hazard in connection with most disparaging estimates of my intelligence, the sincerity of my professions and the value of my public labors. The case is not altogether peculiar. Every earnest man who goes straight forward in the prosecution of any good work, must take his chances of being scratched in the jungles of this world and harassed by adversaries in the rear. He is fortunate who only now and then finds a small thorn in his flesh. Even the man who spends his time in play must incur some risk, and he gives form to his resolution when he says :

"I will stand the hazards of the die."

Whoever will wage an uncompromising war with error, by following Truth, Reason, and his deepest convictions, wherever they may lead, will find that life is not a mere holiday entertainment. Now and then he will feel the sting of the scorpion; and somewhere the cold, dark shadow of the cross will fall athwart his strait and narrow way. But he is a poor soldier who turns back to seek the flowery walks and those peaceful scenes where indifference inspires the sluggard's dreams. If we would be worthy of the great Liberty wherewith "the truth shall make us free," we must follow our highest light faithfully, fearlessly and to the end, though

" At our heels all hell should rise
With blackest insurrection !"

If further evidence should be required to satisfy the reader that Mr. Hazard neither sought for nor cared to have an honest expression of the writer's real views on the subject of materialization, that evidence may be found at the beginning of his long-winded appeal to popular ignorance and the prejudices of a class of persons whom we have never consciously injured by word or deed. That I may do him no injustice I quote his words literally as follows :

" If Dr. Brittan will read my letter a little more carefully than he appears to have done, he will perceive that *I do not ask him to state his private views in regard to Form Materialization, that being a matter which I have no right to interfere with in any way, as long as his views are not publicly proclaimed.*"*

Here it is distinctly implied that I entertain views in private which are at war with my written and published opinions. Yet, strange as it may seem, there is not, in this connection, a single word to indicate that there is anything in this kind of deception to offend the moral sense of a critic whose *cacoethes carpendi* moves

* I emphasize the significant portions of this extract.

him, with several other careless writers, to assume the office of public censor.

“ Poor man ! poor critics ! He and they
The same impulsive force obey.”

It would seem that a man may be a Janus-faced hypocrite and live a lie—false, of necessity, in heart and at home—and yet we are left to infer that this does not justify one in meddling with his affairs. Our captious critic does not hesitate to meddle with and arraign us for our honest convictions ; nor does he scruple to misrepresent our views and conduct ; but—overcome by a sudden paroxysm of modesty—he claims “ no right to interfere with ” this soulless masquerade, “ so long as his [my] views are not publicly proclaimed.” In other words, *so long as the principal actor is prudently reticent and careful to wear a becoming mask while he is on exhibition !*

Now I need not remind your readers that, so far from disguising my convictions on any important question, they have for more than forty years—on all proper occasions—found a free and fearless expression, all temporal interests being held in subordination to the truth. The gentleman from Rhode Island not only overrates his personal influence, but he may possibly hazard his reputation for veracity, by telling people who have known me long and well that for more than a third of a century I have been masquerading before them like a fool, with nothing to conceal my real character but the false face and rent mantle of the hypocrite !

Mr. Hazard reports that he finds my paper on Our Spiritual Guests to be “ couched in fifty-five paragraphs.” In respect to one-quarter of all these he is content to garble and re-state the substance of the same after his own peculiar fashion, without comment, and with as much self-complacency as if his own superior style involved a discovery likely to mark an epoch in polemical literature. He seems to indulge in the childish fancy that in thus

mutilating the original he has made an improvement upon the writer's method of expressing his ideas, and incidentally given the rest of mankind a new and important lesson in *belles-lettres*. All through his stilted harangue he, here and there, breaks the uneven and knotted thread of his disputatious discourse, to keep up the by-play of the schoolmaster, by lecturing me on the proprieties of speech. He has a mortal dread of "personalities," and professes to regard them as "unbecoming" the character of a gentleman and a scholar. True, he uses offensive terms with remarkable freedom in his published correspondence, but he is careful at the same time to instruct the Editor-at-Large—to whom they are chiefly applied—to "use the language only suitable to the dignity of his new and responsible position." With what degree of sincerity Mr. Hazard preaches to me upon the impropriety of "personalities," which *I have not used*, may be inferred from the illustrations furnished by himself for the delectation of his readers. Examples like the following are numerous as potato-bugs in his recent exegetical writings.* [The reader is requested to peruse the subjoined note.]

* Only a few choice specimens are necessary to give the reader an idea of their general quality; also of our critic's conscientiousness as a reviewer, and of the ample resources of his magazine of small arms. It will be observed that he is eminently free from all restraints in the use of vituperative speech. In his untruthful characterization of the Editor-at-Large and his labors he speaks of his "characteristic flings;" of his "condemnatory *dictum* of the whole fraternity;" of his "having freed his bosom of the 'perilous stuff'" that was in it; of "'a laughing devil in his sneer;" of the "receptacle of bigotry, malice and suspicion;" of the "untold amount of self-conceit;" of his "crude and worn-out puerilities;" of the Doctor's "fiftieth covert fling at the materializing manifestations;" of his "educated self-sufficiency;" and again and repeatedly of his "flings" and "intolerable puerilities." This is quite sufficient to enable the reader to recognize the impersonal character and elegance of the reviewer's diction. If he seems to be wanting in several amiable qualities of mind and heart, and a certain heavenly disposition toward his fellow-men, it must at least be conceded that this epithetic epistolizer has a remarkable style.

And then it may not be forgotten that the Spirit of the ancient pharisee came at this juncture and materialized through our critic. And it came to pass when that Spirit had taken possession of our brother, and had the medium under complete control, he lifted up his hands in holy indignation, and cried with a loud voice, saying, "*I thank*

Allow me to observe in passing that when Mr. Hazard pretends to quote my words, he does it so heedlessly that my language is, here and there, corrupted, and the meaning utterly obscured. By his blundering I am made to dishonor the venerable shade of Lindley Murray, and to show my contempt for the rules of English grammar. For an example, see a paragraph near the middle of the second column of the last division of his so-called review of *Our Spiritual Guests*, where he makes me say, History, sacred and profane, "*are*" full of such examples. Let us hope to make our peace with the offended ghosts of the grammarians by saying that this is not our work. The critic himself is the author of "*his-tory . . . are full.*"

This same gentleman is liable to substitute words of his own for those of the author he is reviewing. An example of this class will be found in the upper portion of the same column, near the close of a long extract, where—in his office of simplifier—he manages to confuse your readers by destroying the sense of the author's language. There, without authority or reason, he makes me responsible for this passage: They feed on miracles with an "*omniferous*" appetite! This word is derived from the Latin,

God I have no belief in so ghastly a doctrine!" What "doctrine?" It may be necessary to explain here the nature of this terrible "doctrine," which is qualified by an adjective meaning, according to Webster, "*pale, death-like, ghost-like, and horrible!*" Now the reader will be surprised to know that by "ghastly doctrine" the pharisaical Spirit, speaking through Bro. Hazard, merely refers to our suggestion concerning the probable manner in which Honto turned the scales at Chittenden when Colonel Olcott weighed her. This frightful, so-called "doctrine" which so shocked the materialized Spirit of the pharisee, and thrilled the nerves of his chosen medium, is all embraced in the simple intimation that the Indian Maiden may have turned the scale without stepping on the platform! Would you believe it possible that it was

"Merely this, and nothing more"?

But the croaking of the raven is an omen dire! What a monstrous doctrine, to be sure! And how can an Editor-at-Large atone for such atrocious wickedness? "The mountain labored" in Rhode Island, and no less a personage than Jehovah is summoned to behold the outcome!

and means *all-bearing* ; or *productive of all kinds*. Hence I am made to say, They feed on miracles with an *all-bearing appetite*—*an appetite that produces all kinds*. [Thus, according to our simplifier, appetite is the producing cause of all miracles!] Instead of this unintelligible jargon, the word the writer used was *omnivorous*, which is defined by Webster to mean *all-devouring* ; *eating everything indiscriminately*. It will be perceived that the term we really employed is significant, and that it has a manifest relation to *feeding* and to *appetite*. The extreme gullibility of some people—who do little or nothing in this world but hunt for and exhibit whatever most excites our wonder—justifies the observation that they feed on miracles with an omnivorous or all-devouring appetite.

We have always cherished a profound faith in the veracity of figures ; but our confidence would be shaken, just now, if we did not reflect that it is no fault of the figures if Bro. Hazard changes the numbers. This is one phase of his exuberant liberty, and of his new process of simplification, of which we have an example in the fourth column of the last instalment of his review, where *he deliberately takes twenty-five pounds from the normal weight of Charles Lawrence, thus making it an even hundred*. It is true that this quarter of a hundred once had something to do with the physical perfection and manly proportions of our friend ; but it is not of much consequence now, since in the parlance of this world Lawrence, I believe, is dead ; and while living he always seemed to care so little for the material clothing of his spirit, that I am sure he will never pursue the party who has contrived to make way with so much of his old wardrobe. He was not the man to quarrel about trifles. And of what possible use was so much common dust to the spirit ? There is no occasion to indemnify Lawrence for his loss.

But all this is quite harmless compared with the venomous mat-

ter which proceeds from the same source. The perversity of our critic is revealed in a most surprising manner in the third column of the first part of his review. Assuming, in his own peculiar style of offensive dogmatism, that I not only entertain but have expressed just such views as he chooses to attribute to me, *he* goes on in the following strain, employing the language which he had previously used in one of his own letters :

“ As I have remarked in my letter, it would seem to follow most conclusively that ‘ every materializing medium on either continent, in whose presence tangible Spirit-forms have been presented, must have been a trickster ; and every investigator and witness who have given credence to the actuality of the phenomena as genuine, tangible materialized forms, have been either dupes or knaves.’ ”

It will be observed that while Mr. Hazard incidentally admits that *this language is all his own*, he includes the same, beginning with the word “ every ” in the second line, *in quotation marks*, as if it were borrowed from some other author ; and to the end, as it would seem, that the reader, losing sight of his verbal admission at the beginning, may hold the present writer responsible for such language. I am pained to think that any man, who either claims to represent the higher phases of Spiritualism or to have a decent respect for human nature and fair dealing, could possibly descend so low as to resort to such a device. I do not affirm that this was the design of the gentleman who assumes to be my teacher. On the contrary, I should be pleased to know that it was not. But what is the evidence of the succeeding context ? Here it is, and the reader will form his own judgment. The extract is a part of the same paragraph from which the foregoing passage—not excepting the writer’s defective grammar—is taken, and it directly follows the preceding extract in unbroken connection :

“ It seems almost impossible that any man professing to be a Spiritualist, however gifted by nature with talents or endowed by education with

learning, should venture to bring such astounding charges against the scores of materializing mediums and thousands of investigators and believers in that phase of the phenomena, without being prepared to sustain them by facts derived from long-continued investigations and observations of the subject in the presence of materializing mediums: and it was with the object, in part, of learning from whom Dr. Brittan had derived the knowledge that warranted him in making his sweeping denunciations, that I asked him in the letter to which I have before referred to give the names, &c., of the materializing mediums in the presence of whom he had reached his unfavorable conclusions."

Here I am boldly accused of having made "astounding charges against scores of materializing mediums and thousands of investigators and believers," and of "making sweeping denunciations" of the same, when the truth is *I have never done anything of the kind. Every word of this spiteful splurge was generated in the critic's own mind*, and is evidence of *splenitis* or of some disorder of the brain.

Mr. Hazard seems to lose sight of the fact that he is in the presence of his peers (and is expected to demean himself accordingly), when he repeatedly intimates, in no ambiguous terms, that I have no knowledge of the higher phenomena, the only ground of his implied assumption being the fact that I can not be dragooned into leaving my appropriate business to write out a long history of my observations and experience for him to carp at.* It is true I was the first person in this country to give public lectures on Spiritual Phenomena and Mediumship; that I edited the first distinctively spiritual paper in the world (so far as appears from the evidence); and that from 1847 to the present hour I have been almost continuously, in one way or another, employed as an investigator of

* Mr. Hazard would have me neglect my obvious duty and utterly disregard my obligations to the public. He knows that I am under a positive engagement to write for the secular press in the interest of Spiritualism and liberal ideas. The unworthy and irrational attempts to strangle this important project at its birth having failed, he is now doing what he can, with such assistance as is offered, to divert the Editor-at-Large from his appointed work.

the facts and a journalistic writer in the interest of Spiritualism. But all this signifies nothing in the estimation of the man who has the vanity to presume that his innuendo will disprove authentic history, and demonstrate the writer's utter ignorance of the higher manifestations.

After several times charging me with "repeatedly and dogmatically" denouncing respectable citizens, and demanding that I should furnish the proofs of the "rascality, . . . folly and knavery" of honest and sensible people, he again—toward the close of his turgid manifesto—returns to the charge. The ebullition of bad feeling is not subdued or diminished by the previous unlimited freedom of the same elements. The unquenchable fire still burns with the old intensity, and the eruption continues in the usual style, as will appear from an additional sample of the matter ejected. Here is the last specimen to be offered :

"I again respectfully but determinedly demand of him, in the name of our scores of injured materializing mediums, and thousands of their advocates and friends, whom Dr. B. has so grossly traduced, that he proceed to publish in some form the 'demonstrative evidence' he has obtained that warrants him in scattering abroad such wholesale accusations."

Here it is again alleged that I have "grossly traduced" and "injured scores of materializing mediums, and thousands of their advocates and friends." To show that all this splenetic stuff is utterly and forever at war with the facts in the case, I beg to reproduce two brief passages *from the very article which Mr. Hazard is reviewing*. Here they are, *verbatim*, and a righteous public will judge whether or not I have "traduced," or otherwise "injured," any medium in the world :

EXTRACT FROM OUR SPIRITUAL GUESTS.

Let no one infer that I am disposed to question the genuineness of many phenomena which occur in connection with the cabinet. Spirits certainly have power to show themselves there as elsewhere ;

but in resting the claims of Spiritualism on any class of facts, I deem it best to select examples which offer to the skeptical mind the least ground of objection. In respect to the cabinet manifestations, it seems proper that each particular case should be examined and judged on its own intrinsic merits; *and if, in the end, there remains a question concerning the reality of the facts, it is only just to give the medium the benefit of the doubt.*

The writer has no disposition to be hypercritical, or to indulge in unjust suspicions of persons when the evidence is inconclusive. It was Bacon who observed that "Suspensions among thoughts are like bats among birds, which ever fly by twilight." *When more light is wanted, let us be generous and give the medium the benefit of every doubt.* Whenever the phenomena are real (as no doubt they are in many cases), and the forms are both visible and tangible at the same time, *and alike to all observers, it must be evident that the Spirit is clothed with material vestments.*

Here is the demonstrative evidence that I was careful to conscientiously respect the rights and to tenderly shield the reputation of every true medium. And yet how am I misrepresented! This conduct is a loud protest indeed against the Golden Rule. There is a reason why I should not indulge in any comments here. The only terms which fitly characterize this conduct do not belong to the vocabulary employed in gentlemanly discussion, and I will use no other terms. But if this is not infidelity to truth, justice, and every principle of fraternal fellowship, pray what is it?

" His composure must be rare indeed,
Whom these things can not blemish."

If I have, at any time, denounced a single genuine medium as a trickster, let the particular person be named; if I have ever called any respectable citizen a knave, show us the man, and *let the specific charges be rendered in my own words.* I will not allow any one

—except lunatics and outlaws—to attempt to cram me with his own impure English, malevolent passions and offensive epithets. I am not to be mistaken for a mere blunderbuss that may be charged to the muzzle with foul explosives and fired off into a crowd of respectable people for whom I have not one feeling of unkindness. I have denounced no honest man ; there is not one who can say I have called him a knave or otherwise treated him in an ungentlemanly manner. If I have, as occasion demanded, used censorious words, they have not had the remotest reference to any real medium or sincere believer in Spiritualism. My accuser knows, if he is not hopelessly blind and willfully ignorant, that *I have been careful to limit the application of all such terms to persons guilty of false pretenses in claiming to exercise the gift of mediumship, when they are only experimenting on human credulity from mercenary motives.* In savagely assailing me for this, my reviewer comes—with whatever weight of character and influence he may possess—to make gross deception and fraud respectable, and to the defense of every hypocritical vagabond who thus steals

—“ the livery of the court of heaven
To serve the devil in.”

What any man can possibly gain—which a good man would wish to possess—by inspiring among mediums a feeling of resentment against one who has never injured them, I do not know. If we could be sure that he is fully responsible for this unworthy attempt to excite the prejudices of a large class of persons, whom the writer has often served by shielding them from public reprobation, we should be obliged to infer the existence of a malicious purpose. But we should not hastily accept this most unwelcome conclusion. We must, after all, judge Mr. Hazard dispassionately and in charity. It is perhaps rather to be inferred that his mind—from the influence of many painful experiences—has been led to dwell so long, and

with such intensity, on one subject, that he has come to regard any man who may venture to express an honest opinion at variance with his own as a personal enemy, and a very Judas Iscariot to the cause. If he will direct the current of his thoughts into some other channel for a time, we may hope that he will recover from this mania.

A review, however searching and severe, by a candid and competent critic, would be regarded as a compliment by any sensible man. It would certainly give us pleasure, and might afford instruction. But there is nothing inspiring in the scenery and associations of a mere chop-house. If one had a special aptitude for carving, we might consent to be subdivided within reasonable limits—never beyond the possible identification of our remains—but from purely æsthetic considerations we object to being ground up in a sausage-mill !

The article on Our Spiritual Guests was called for, and we freely gave it to the public. We did not therein assume to express the views of other people. No; it was the legitimate offspring of our own mind. Will the reader pardon our vanity? we thought it, on the whole, rather comely in shape and by no means offensive in spirit. But alas! its original outlines and principal features are now fearfully broken and disfigured. In the mutilated remains which the cleaver has left and Mr. Hazard has scattered over so much unconsecrated ground, we can no more recognize the form and image of our child. No, never! This seems like unnecessary cruelty. Instead of a fair creation, warmed by a living spirit and endowed with voice and expression, he gives us back only these poor relics. The iconoclast prefers only scattered fragments of things instead of their complete forms; and so it suits his taste to demolish our household gods with an unsparing hand. *De gustibus non est disputandum.*

If any one is inclined to think that this communication is unnec-

essarily severe, I beg to remind him that I have neither sought nor provoked a personal controversy with any man in the ranks of Spiritualism, from first to last. From the beginning I have made it my business to battle with the common enemy. When of late I have occasionally been obliged to pause in this steady resistance of the outside opposition, it has been because *I found it necessary to lift a shield over myself, and to parry the blows of pretended friends of our common cause. I never made the most distant allusion to any one of my assailants until I was myself the subject of a personal assault*; and not one among this little but noisy company of fault-finders—numbering altogether less than a baker's dozen—can assign any reason for his hostility that Reason would not blush to own. My acceptance of the office of Editor-at-Large was my offense. For more than thirty years no Spiritualist had publicly censured me, but thenceforth I was to be the target for dogmatic believers and unsatisfied aspirants for place and power.

Human nature is capable of great endurance when the necessity exists. We chiefly shrink from the *unnecessary* ills of this present world. The evils which might be averted subject our patience to the severest trial. We could listen with a kind of satisfaction to a trip-hammer, so long as some utilitarian purpose justified the noise. But if one should carry round an old saw under his arm, and insist on filing it at all hours, merely for his own amusement and to rasp the nerves of the by-standers, we should exercise our privilege, and get out of his way. So we would shun the spirit that begets suspicion, bitterness and strife; that fills the world with distrust, detraction and discord. The spirit that poisons the very springs of fraternal feeling and social life is no angel of light, but an ugly old hag whose nearest approach to the divine harmonies

—“is a perpetual jar.”

People who love “Peace and pursue it,” get away—as far as

possible without shunning the responsibilities of life—from all dogmatic babblers and common scolds. The reverent mind becomes sick of ceaseless and causeless strife. It is Burke who says :

“ Men have no right to what is not reasonable.”

Where is the reason or justification for this bitter warfare? And what warrant has any man for attempting to hound even the humblest disciple of the Truth from the chosen field of any honorable and useful labor? Surrounded by the elements of this unnecessary and profitless strife, the weary soul longs for the sweet solace of silence and solitude; praying in spirit, as did the Hebrew minstrel, “ Oh, that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest.”

Here my part in this unwelcome controversy ends. Regretting the necessity which called for this communication, and trusting that your readers will pardon me for once occupying so much space in my own defense, I now take leave of Mr. Hazard with sincere wishes for his physical health and spiritual welfare.

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE, WARREN CO., N. J., }
Sept. 20, 1880. }

APPENDIX B.

THE WESTERN SPIRITUAL PRESS.

AT an early day the enterprise which proposed to employ the Secular Press in the elucidation and defense of Spiritualism, met with most determined opposition ; not, however, from the avowed enemies of the truth, as might have been expected ; but—strange as the fact may seem—from a certain class of professed friends ! The principal facts in the case seem to be essential elements in the true history of the work of the Secular Press Bureau. The truth can not be dishonored, nor can any man be wronged by a candid and dispassionate record of the simple truth in this matter. We have no valuable time to waste in personal disputations, and we have no taste for such occupation. As far as possible—in every controversy—we desire to deal with principles, not men, and will not go beyond our self-imposed limit in the freedom of discussion. My readers will remember that conspicuous among the phases of the opposition to the Editor-at-Large and the method adopted by the Secular Press Bureau, was the unfriendly attitude of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. Even while the preliminary arrangements were in progress, and before the public had witnessed the actual inauguration of the work, the following appeared as an editorial leader in the *Journal* of the date of December 20, 1879 :

THE “ EDITOR-AT-LARGE ” SCHEME.

There was inaugurated several months since through the columns of our esteemed Boston contemporary, a scheme to raise a fund wherewith to

retain Prof. S. B. Brittan to defend Spiritualism through the columns of the scientific, religious and secular journals of this country. The plan does not appear to have been received with much enthusiasm, for after obtaining the strongest editorial indorsement from our contemporary in successive issues, the fund has now only reached \$260, and of this amount the sum of \$200 is given by three contributors. We have lately been solicited by one who thinks favorably of the attempt to "say some earnest words for this enterprise" in the *Journal*. We had hoped to escape the necessity of defining our position on this matter; and owing to a sincere friendship for Prof. Brittan, it is with profound regret we feel obliged, after mature deliberation, to wholly dissent to the proposed scheme and for the following among other reasons :

1. There does not appear to have been any agreement entered into on the part of a single scientific, religious or secular journal to publish articles which Prof. Brittan may offer; and furthermore, there is no probability that any such agreement can be made. It is a notorious fact that on many occasions when Spiritualism has been most grossly maligned and misrepresented in the columns of scientific magazines and leading secular papers, some of our ablest writers have without price proffered replies and been refused space, and this, too, when by every principle of right and justice the adherents of Spiritualism were entitled to a hearing.

2. Leading periodicals and secular papers are governed wholly by the demand; they cater to the general public or to special classes, and are quick to note what their readers want, and are able and ready to *buy* at fair prices such matter as is required. The mere fact that an article can be had free of cost is, of itself, no inducement to influential papers to give it space. That they do not buy articles on Spiritualism, is an evidence that their customers do not demand that commodity. Horace Greeley once remarked to an enthusiastic and able editorial writer who desired to illustrate certain truths in a series of editorials, and who defended his plan on the ground that the articles would tend to enlighten and benefit the people: "I am not offering goods that won't sell, it is not alone a question of merit; the main question is, Are they salable?" That answer settled the publication of the editorials and the young man too.

3. Having raised a sufficient fund (how much?) to retain Prof. Brittan for the "defense," it will then become necessary to raise another fund large enough to pay from fifty cents to one dollar per line for the space used in such leading periodicals and papers as will be of any service to Spiritualism; thus the quixotic, chimerical aspect of the enterprise is at once apparent.

4. Supposing a sufficient fund were raised and the publishers of the leading scientific, religious and secular papers were to generously unite in establishing the office of Spiritualist Superintendency of Editors* (for that is what the proposed plan amounts to), and were to throw open the columns of their respective publications to Dr. Brittan, what would be the immediate result? How long would it be before the accommodating editors of such papers would have a hornet's nest about their ears in the shape of articles from other Spiritualists, dissenting vigorously from one or more of Dr. Brittan's statements and declaring that what they respectively offered was the real *bona fide* thing, and that Spiritualism would suffer in the eyes of the world unless at once set right?

This is no overdrawn picture of the probabilities, and brings us back to the realization that after all, the Spiritualist press must be relied on to promulgate and expound the truths of Spiritualism; and it will do the work in due time and in its own way. In the various Spiritualist papers there is room for all the learning, talent, culture and inspiration to be found in the ranks of Spiritualism. Let Spiritualists support their own papers with that alacrity and zeal which duty to mankind demands, and the Spiritualist press will then be able to pay liberally such able men as Prof. Brittan and hundreds of others for their labor, and will assume a place in the current literature of the age second in power and influence to none.

We are always highly interested in whatever Prof. Brittan writes, and agree therewith in the main; we should be most happy to have a way open so that he could devote his whole time to writing for the Spiritualist press. He is now a regular contributor for the *Banner of Light*, and if that paper will throw its columns open to him without placing any restrictions on what he shall write about, and he will freely and frankly give his views on the various important questions of vital interest constantly arising in our ranks, we will not object to the raising of a permanent fund to pay him for his services, and we will subscribe to the same \$50.00, which is the amount Messrs. Colby & Rich give to the "Editor-at-Large" enterprise. This offer we make as a sort of compromise, and do not thereby mean to be understood as favoring the "Editor-at-Large" scheme, however modified; for at best the plan will be looked upon by the general Spiritualist public as but another eleemosynary device. And the demand will be made, that the scope of the work be sufficiently enlarged to

*No superintendency of the spiritual journalism of the country was ever dreamed of by any one interested in the Bureau. Not even the remotest suggestion of the kind emanated from any one except those whose aim was to defeat the enterprise.

bring within its field dozens of men and women, who as mediums and lecturers, have unselfishly labored in the cause from ten to thirty years, and who now in their declining days find themselves in poverty, unable to alleviate their most pressing wants.

The reader will have observed that in the foregoing article it is confidently assumed that it would be quite impossible to obtain space for the proposed Secular Press Correspondence without paying for it at the regular advertising rates—"from fifty cents to one dollar per line"—as therein specified. This appears to have been the chief ground of objection at the date of the Editor's first mis-sive. Referring to the question of the possible chances of our obtaining access to the columns of important journals he uses this language :—"There is no probability that any such agreement can be made." And yet, according to the estimate of MR. CHARLES D. LAKEY, Editor and proprietor of the *American Builder, the Editor-at-Large*—during the first year of his service—actually occupied the space of 15,000 lines in illustration and defense of *Spiritualism, for which not a single dime was ever paid.*

FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, JANUARY 10, 1880.

“THE ‘EDITOR-AT-LARGE’ SCHEME AGAIN.

“We exceedingly regret that the reasons we gave for not advocating Prof. Brittan's editor-at-large scheme, should seem to bring us in antagonism with that worthy gentleman. We endeavored to be as considerate as possible, and we think our readers will say that our bill of exceptions, taken as a whole, is good and capable of being in the main sustained, and yet that it is kindly and appreciative toward Dr. Brittan. In the last issue of the *Banner of Light*, Dr. Brittan has an article over his own name on the subject, in which, after stating that he has in the past had articles published in the *Tribune* and *Times* of New York, etc., he adds:”

[As the *Journal's* method of dismembering our paragraphs is not at all suited to our taste, we may here do ourself justice by the insertion of a more extended extract than that paper was pleased to give to its readers.]

As I am writing this for the information of Spiritualists who are presumed to be well informed, it is hardly necessary to remind them that, for many years, the present writer has been a frequent contributor to the columns of the secular press, and that his own articles in defense of Spiritualism have reached hundreds of thousands of readers through the New York *Herald*, *Tribune*, and other widely circulated papers. Some of these contributions have been direct replies to the most virulent assaults of our enemies; and it gives me pleasure to record the fact—as an evidence of honorable improvement in the character of American journalism—that they have been conspicuously published, under displayed lines, and without a single word of editorial detraction or qualification. In view of these facts it will be perceived that the mere speculators in the chances of our obtaining such recognition, and the captious critics who imagine it will be necessary to raise a separate fund to pay for the insertion of such contributions as advertisements, have a no more substantial foundation for their opinions than the idle vagaries of the unwilling mind, and a manifest lack of knowledge of what has already been accomplished.

Articles forwarded to the press from the Editor-at-Large Bureau, if finally declined, will probably be published in the *Banner of Light*, together with such reasons as may be assigned for their rejection. The results of this experiment will enable us to determine who among our secular, scientific and religious journalists believe in justice, and do not fear the result when truth and error meet in an open field. We shall also be able to give all merited distinction to those who insist on nothing but *ex-parte* testimony, and the discussion of only one side of this great question of the ages.

S. B. B.

“We deplore the effect that our well-intentioned article seems to have produced on our most excellent brother. We submit that it is mere speculation as to whether leading papers will publish his articles, hence

the covert sarcasm in the phrase 'mere speculators' grieves us. Again, we appeal to the spiritualistic public to know, if our article warranted Prof. Brittan's use of the term 'captious critics?' True, he has so worded his letter that the readers of the *Banner* who do not see the *Journal* will not know that he refers to us, yet it is apparent what he means, though it is discreet not to let the mass of his readers know from whence the objections to his scheme come—when we speak of the scheme as one of Dr. Brittan's own conception we speak advisedly and from personal knowledge. Furthermore, we did not speak from 'lack of knowledge of what has already been accomplished,' but, on the contrary, with a full knowledge thereof.

The kernel of this nut is laid bare in the second paragraph quoted from Dr. Brittan. So after all Brother Brittan is to be paid by the general public for writing articles which 'will probably be published in the *Banner of Light*.' That is good! Very good! The probability is so near a certainty that it is safe to say a very large proportion of the articles will *certainly* be published in the *Banner*.*

To this we have no objection; what we do object to is the attempt to foist an eleemosynary scheme upon the public in this way; and, too, there are very grave doubts as to whether some of the subscriptions as published are *bona fide*. We do not say they are not; far be it from us to make such a grave and damning assertion, but we simply state a fact when we say there is a wide-spread doubt on the subject.

We are authorized to and do hereby offer to the editor of the Banner of Light, \$25 toward the fund if he will produce the evidence on demand of our attorney, which shall prove that the purported donation of \$500 was bona fide. It is not essential that the name of the donor be made public. If the proposition is accepted we will name our attorney, place the money in his hands, and on receipt of his report will publish the same, and thus either allay or confirm the suspicions now held by many, including representative people who are perfectly friendly toward both Dr. Brittan and our Boston contemporary."

In the first of the two preceding articles the editor of the *Journal* incidentally refers to an "eleemosynary device," and in the second, having become assured that his ungracious suspicion was well-

* Time has verified the truth of this prophecy, but it remains to be stated that they mainly appeared in the *Banner* after they had been widely published in influential secular journals, which fact it suits the policy of the *Journal* to suppress.

founded, he boldly assumes, as a matter of fact, "the attempt to foist an eleemosynary scheme upon the public in this way." Let us briefly analyze his language. To *foist* is to introduce without authority, and surreptitiously, fraudulently, or by the practice of some deception. *Eleemosynary* is a term that has a special relation to charity or alms-giving. It is also applied to persons who are dependent, or can only subsist at the expense of others. *A pauper is an eleemosynary individual.* A *scheme* is a particular plan or practical method by which some purpose, object or end is to be accomplished.

Now if the Editor of the *Journal* really comprehended the significance of the terms he employed—and we suppose he did—he must have intended to say, in substance at least, that the Editor-at-Large, Luther Colby, Isaac B. Rich and other prominent friends of the Secular Press Bureau, were engaged in an attempt, by fraudulent representations, to force the present writer upon an unwilling public as an object of charity. By what authority did he assume that the friends and promoters of this enterprise were all enlisted in a conspiracy to mislead and defraud the public, and why was the present writer thus unceremoniously dragooned before his readers as a miserable and unworthy dependent on public charity? He takes me for a medicant; but I have never asked alms at the hands of any person on earth. The man who may—at least for the present, and so long as health and the exercise of his faculties remain—obtain, by honest labor, a respectable subsistence in any one of a half dozen different ways, is by no means reduced to the dire necessity which the *Journal's* language most distinctly implies. If other parties choose to employ such a man in any capacity, and he—finding the proposed work congenial to his taste and the habit of his life—elects to perform skilled labor for the small wages of an ordinary mechanic, he can scarcely be regarded as less honorably self-supporting on that account. Why, then, did the editor of the

Journal employ such language in referring to the present writer if not to dishonor him before the public? What motive inspired the cool affront thus offered to the several gentlemen and ladies associated with him in the same work, if it was not a disposition to degrade them in the estimation of his readers?

It can not have escaped the observation of the reader that the proprietor of the *Journal* fills his whole paper, from week to week, with matter ostensibly prepared and published in the interest of Spiritualism. *But he does not give his paper away; nor does he propose to work for nothing and find himself.* It is fair to presume that he depends on the subscriptions of his four thousand patrons to defray the necessary expenses in the prosecution of this journalistic work. He has also been accustomed to depend on several writers for free contributions to his columns. But seeing this dependence upon others for the support of his enterprise—through all its history—no one has yet been so ungracious as to even suggest that the publication of his paper is an “attempt to foist an eleemosynary scheme upon the public.”

In the concluding portion of the *Journal's* article of January 10, 1880, it is distinctly intimated that the subscription of \$500 by one man to the Editor-at-Large fund *was not bona fide.* To be sure, this involved the inference that several honorable gentlemen were guilty of false pretenses, and were wickedly conspiring to defraud the public. But the sower who went forth to scatter the seeds of suspicion and discord in many minds and hearts, did not hesitate to act on his own conclusion. On this point he was so confident as to offer *twenty-five dollars*, to be paid into the treasury of the fund, on the one single condition that the Editor of the *Banner of Light* would first prove to the *Journal's* attorney that the \$500 was really subscribed in good faith and actually paid. The further pledge was given that the facts developed by the investigation would be published in the Western organ of Spiritualism. This

offer was promptly accepted; the attorney presented himself in due time and pursued his inquiries at headquarters; the facts relating to the subscription and payment of the money were all proved, by evidence that would be accepted as decisive in any court for the trial of civil causes in this country. But no public report was ever made of the result; to the best of our knowledge and belief the Western spiritual paper *did not publish the facts* elicited by its chosen attorney; and we have authority for adding that the *Journal's* subscription to the Editor-at-Large fund remains unpaid.

TAKING UP A NEW POSITION.

It soon became evident that the Secular Press Correspondence of the Editor-at-Large was finding its way into the best papers in city and country, and the good results were also beginning to be apparent. The original ground occupied by the spiritualistic opposition was powerfully shaken; it threatened to cave in or otherwise slip from beneath the feet of the besieging forces. One may possibly exhibit something like strategy, even when he goes forth to engage alone in a war of words. A sudden change of base became a necessity, and this was happily accomplished by a most skillful manœuver, the Colonel commanding. We find the following "order of the day" in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of January 31, 1880:

TO SPIRITUALISTS!

"You will all readily admit the need of an organized and sustained aggressive policy on the part of Spiritualists in dealing with the world of opposition and ignorance with which we have to contend in advancing a knowledge of Spiritual Truth. The desirability of meeting misstatements, ignorant criticisms and unjust attacks through the same channels in which they are given to the public, is patent to all and needs no argument. To overcome the obstacles in the way and secure this desirable object is to some extent possible now, provided united and persistent

effort is made, and the sooner we begin and the longer we persist in such united and aggressive action, the easier will become the task.

While there is a general agreement as to the advisability of such action, there arise differences as to the best method of initiating and carrying on the work. There appear grave objections and dangers, in the minds of many, to clothing any single individual with authority to represent the millions of Spiritualists, and the certainty of division on this point will tend to seriously affect the desired object.*

Further, the difficulty of raising a fund from year to year sufficient to pay an adequate salary for such purpose is broached, and with great force, we admit, in view of the unorganized condition of Spiritualists and the comparatively limited support given even to spiritual publications and lecturers. It seems to us that these difficulties, and others nearly as serious, can be overcome, in a great measure, and the work rendered feasible, by dividing the duties and responsibilities of the work among a goodly number, who shall perform it without pecuniary consideration. We are all co-workers, brothers and sisters in this glorious labor of love, and it matters not who does any particular task, so that it is well and promptly done.

Therefore we, the undersigned, pledge ourselves to gratuitously do this work; and ask each and every Spiritualist, respectively, to write their names as members of our corps of advisers and helpers. Let all keep watch and guard, and whenever one sees occasion for action, let him either devote himself to the task, or refer it, with the proper data, to the one on this list whom he thinks best qualified for that particular case or the special work in view.

The time demands our united action, and, united in a common cause, we will zealously and persistently work together for the achievement of a common purpose.

J. M. PEEBLES, Hamonton, N. J.
 HUDSON TUTTLE, Berlin Heights, Ohio.
 SAMUEL WATSON, Memphis, Tenn.
 SAMUEL BIGELOW, Alliance, Ohio.
 D. P. KAYNER, Chicago, Ill.
 E. S. HOLBROOK, Chicago, Ill.

* The Editor-at-Large no more claimed "authority to represent the millions of Spiritualists" than does the Editor of the *Journal*, who fills his whole paper with his views and those of his correspondents, on the same general subject. The *Journal's* man of straw has leave to retire from our presence.

MRS. MARY WILSON, Lombard, Ill.
 E. W. BOND, Willoughby, Ohio.
 J. MURRAY CASE, Columbus, Ohio.
 LYMAN C. HOWE, Fredonia, N. Y.
 A. B. SPINNEY, Detroit, Mich.
 BRONSON MURRAY, New York City.
 MRS. EMMA TUTTLE, Berlin Heights, Ohio.
 J. G. JACKSON, Hockessin, Del.
 GILES B. STEBBINS, Washington, D. C.
 E. V. WILSON, Lombard, Ill.
 A. B. FRENCH, Clyde, Ohio.
 H. H. BROWN, Brooklyn, N. Y.
 MRS. MARIA M. KING, Hammonton, N. J.
 WM. E. COLEMAN, Fort Sill, I. T.
 WM. FISHBOUGH, Brooklyn, N. Y.
 C. FANNY ALLYN, Stoneham, Mass.
 JOHN A. HOOVER, Philadelphia, Pa."

In this Manifesto the importance of the work we had undertaken to perform is freely admitted, and the necessity for the prosecution of the same is urged upon the public as highly important. It is also acknowledged that if "the obstacles in the way" had not yet been "overcome," they might be by proper effort, and the friends of Spiritualism are exhorted to "persist in such united and aggressive action." Only one essential modification of the plan seems to have been thought necessary at that time to secure for the movement a certain and grand success. The new feature to be introduced was to *abolish the fund*, and thus not only conserve the priceless virtue of economy among our people, but, at the same time, furnish many conspicuous and memorable examples of disinterested devotion and cheerful self-sacrifice in the cause of truth.

To illustrate the reprehensible prodigality of the subscribers to the fund, and to convince others that there was no sense in this useless waste of money, the names and residences of *twenty-three Editors-at-Large* were furnished, all of whom are represented as volunteering to perform the same or similar labors without any

material recompense for their services. There are some excellent names in this list; minds whose ability we are pleased to recognize, more especially since they are credited with disinterested labors in the past. One of the most distinguished among them called on the writer, only a few days after the article addressed TO SPIRITUALISTS appeared, and apologized for the presence of his name in that connection. He declared that *he had been deceived*; that he had been asked to merely allow his name to be used in connection with *an article on missionary labor*; and that not even the most distant intimation was given him that the proposed article would make any reference whatever to the Editor-at-Large work. Such were the representations—as stated by the gentleman himself—that induced him to consent to the use of his name. This is suggestive of what may have been the facts in some other cases, but comment is unnecessary.

Of course the *Journal's* final appeal produced the effect the author intended on the minds of Western Spiritualists who read that paper. They did not generally subscribe to the Secular Press Bureau fund. It may have seemed a little singular to the uninitiated that the twenty-three did not immediately rush to the field and engage in the service to which they had been assigned. We are not informed that any one of the volunteer (?) Editors-at-Large made any particular move in that direction. If they acted at all, it must have been with so much reserve and secrecy that their movements did not arrest public attention. But we are not authorized to arraign any one for a neglect of duty on this account. If the volunteer editorial corps, recruited by Colonel Bundy, did not do anything to speak of, and at the same time no one expressed surprise, *it was probably for the reason that no one ever expected them to enter the service as proposed.*

PLACED IN A FALSE POSITION.

Soon after the publication of the paper on Our Spiritual Guests, a lengthy editorial leader appeared in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, purporting to be a review of the same. It was respectful in terms, and otherwise calculated to leave the impression on the mind of the reader that the purpose of the writer was friendly, and the spirit which inspired it altogether catholic. But this apparently friendly review *totally misrepresented our position on the question of Materialization*. It left the reader to infer that we attributed *all the phenomena* ordinarily embraced under this head to the magnetic influence and psychological action of Spirits, exerted through the sensory nerves upon the human mind in the body. We had carefully analyzed and classified the facts, commonly described as "the materialization of spirits," dividing them into *four separate classes*, each of which was clearly defined. Only *one* of the four classes was attributed to the psychological powers of the Spirits and their influence over the senses and the minds of mortals.*

Now it seemed to be eminently proper to correct this misrepresentation, that we might not be placed in a false position before the readers of the *Journal*, and we took the least offensive way of making this correction. Having no inclination to encourage personal and acrimonious disputations, already too prevalent among professed Spiritualists, we waived our moral right to openly controvert the statements and representations of the editor in his own columns. In a few lines, couched in civil and polite terms, we called his attention to the subject. To such a brief reference—as an introduction—we attached a printed slip containing the four paragraphs embracing our complete classification, requesting, as

* The four paragraphs here referred to as embracing our complete classification may be found on pages 357—361 of this volume.

an act of simple justice to ourself, that the same might be copied into the *Journal*. Our petition was neither granted nor otherwise recognized, and no attention was ever given to our very reasonable request.

The articles which we have reproduced entire, and in which the present writer is represented as engaged with his friends in "an eleemosynary scheme" to "foist" himself upon Spiritualists as an unworthy pensioner upon their bounty, are otherwise almost profuse in expressions of personal respect and friendship for the writer. In the last one—we mean the "indorsed paper"—the great importance of the Secular Press Bureau work, and its feasibility, by the adoption of the method therein proposed, is acknowledged. The reader will scarcely fail to observe, however, that the personal friendship for the Editor-at-Large, and the real measure of interest in the work, find only mute illustration in our Western Spiritual journalism. It is true that the *Banner* did reproduce most of the articles originally published by the secular press; also that important portions of the Bureau Correspondence were republished in foreign countries and highly commended; but the earnest and faithful labor of two years never elicited so much as one line of approval in the columns of the *Journal*.

Among the correspondents who have made the *Journal* the vehicle of offensive personalities and covert attempts to defeat the work of the Editor-at-Large, is one who, in his former extreme poverty, had unlimited freedom at our table, and came, with or without invitation, at all times, until by the death of a relative he suddenly became wealthy, since which auspicious event his shadow has never fallen on our humble threshold. There are several others—obsessed individuals or perhaps otherwise rendered irresponsible, whom we can not compliment by a special notice in this connection, inasmuch as this would be little short of giving gravity to smoke, or undue importance to trifles.

APPENDIX C.

PLEADING TO THE INDICTMENT.

FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, MAY 29, 1880.

IN the *Journal* of April 24th, I find a letter from Mr. A. J. Davis, containing a paragraph which has proved to be of a somewhat sensational character as may be inferred from the comments it has already elicited. My reference is to the following passage :

“Leading minds in Spiritualism in New York and elsewhere seem deeply impressed that it is time to give ‘form’ to that which for so long has been ‘void.’ Who these leading gentlemen are, has not fully come to my knowledge. But I learn, definitely, that Prof. S. B. Brittan, Prof. Kiddle, Prof. Buchanan, Judge Cross, Charles Partridge, Henry J. Newton, and others, moved by kindred convictions, have been and are now at work perfecting a ‘Constitution, By-Laws,’ etc., which may possibly serve to bring order out of chaos. You remember that, some two years ago, I called attention in your columns to the desirableness of an organization, with more than one phase, over each form of which a certain named well-qualified gentleman might with great propriety be called upon to preside. For I doubt, when they once begin to organize, whether one common name and one rationalistic purpose will satisfy the large majority of non-progressives which begin to enter under the wings of Christian Spiritualism. The drift of all thoughtful Spiritualists—especially the influential leaders before mentioned—is undisguisedly toward existing sentimental Christianity. How all this is to subserve the greater spiritualization and liberalization of mankind, is more than I can comprehend. You will, therefore, now and always find me ‘outside’ of the party lines.”

That the persons above named, and others, have been discussing

the subject of organization, and that they have actually framed a Constitution and By-Laws—which may or may not become the organic law of a *de facto* Association—is substantially true. That there is anything particularly “*sentimental*” in this movement—anything of a romantic nature, or involving—as the term may be understood to imply—an excessive exercise, or morbid development of the sensibilities of human nature, is nowhere else apparent save in the foregoing paragraph. In reaching his conclusions our friend rests on the testimony of some one who is not introduced to the reader. It is well ; the witness may preserve his *incognito*. Let us be gracious and waive the cross-examination, while we learn from experience that scientific philosophers and apostles of Nature, as well as other people, may profitably scrutinize the sources of their information.

The assumption that the movement proves and illustrates the fact that “The drift of all thoughtful Spiritualists—especially the influential leaders before mentioned—is undisguisedly toward existing sentimental Christianity,” will derive no possible support from a critical examination of the facts. We never for a moment suspected that any one, even with the duplex lens of microscopic clairvoyance, aided by the double reflectors of a lively imagination, would ever discover a vestige of “Christianism” in the work of the organizers. Christ is neither named nor remotely referred to in their Constitution. Let no hysterical brother be alarmed because the new Society has one *Cross*. To allay all unnecessary apprehension we are ready to affirm that he has nothing whatever to do with the atonement, and that no one is expected to be crucified !

In all that has been put on paper by the Committee on Organization there is not so much as a most distant allusion to the Church ; to the necessity for its continued existence, or for the observance of any religious rite or ceremony. No one is required to accept the peculiar views and dogmatic opinions of another. Not even by

implication does the proposed Constitution limit the freedom of the individual, nor in any way interfere with either his faith, philosophy or worship. It offers no thirty-nine articles, nor any other number, expressive of the religious convictions of its members. It will, therefore, be found to tolerate a larger liberty than is enjoyed within the Episcopal jurisdiction, of which an irreverent member once said he preferred it to any other Church because it never meddled with either politics or religion!

But the sources of consolation, to be derived from the freedom of the Constitution of the new Society, are not yet exhausted. The candidate for admission to membership may be Pagan, Jew, Christian, or Mussulman. He may have one thousand gods or not even one, as may be determined by the inclination of his mind. His theology may embrace seven heavens or seventy thousand; all the hells of Dante, Milton and Swedenborg, or none at all beyond the present life. Moreover, he may believe in Mr. Kersey Graves' "Sixteen Crucified Saviors," multiplied by as many more as he may be able to find in history or evolve from his own brains. Whoever wants a larger liberty than this will not be expected to join the Association. It would be a pity to have any soul of great latent powers and lofty aims cramped and belittled to all eternity for lack of space in which to exercise and grow up to the heavenly standard of his possibilities. Genius must have room for the proper inflation of its ideas if we unroof the world. At the same time it must be confessed, that arbitrary restraints are often inspiring to those who have the power of adequate resistance. Trumbull observed this fact and put the idea thus in two lines of his McFingal:

"For genius swells more strong and clear
When close confined—like bottled beer."

Let us be serious when we may. The qualifications for membership in the new organization, which are really required, may be

thus briefly expressed : *An honest purpose in seeking admission and fellowship ; habits of life and a general deportment which command respect ; and a sincere desire to obtain the truth and promote the welfare of mankind.*

We have some unhappy people among us for whom we are suitably sorry. The mention of the religious idea in their hearing inspires a kind of frenzy or delirium. I scarcely need remind the reader that the Harmonial Philosopher is not one of this class. He believes in the "beautiful religion of Nature," and he is too cool to ever become delirious. Nevertheless, there are several poor victims of the mania that oppose all religion. It may soothe these and relieve other monomaniacs—people tormented by morbid apprehensions of the loss of their own precious independence—to be assured that the *prima facie* evidence is that the organizers are all Atheists, inasmuch as *they have no God in their Constitution.* Now we solemnly affirm this to be the fact in respect to the organic law of the new Association. Is not this enough to bring peace to troubled souls ; to allay the nervous irritability of venerable ladies of both sexes, and to insure the safety of our institutions ? We think it is all that can be required, and we here offer the Poet's benediction :

"Rest, rest, perturbed spirits."

The paragraph I have had occasion to review, regarded as a criticism, is certainly very mild in terms and gentle enough in spirit. If it has appeared to be of mischievous tendency, it is not from the purpose of the writer, but rather from the use which has already been made of it by others. I am not disposed to attribute any unfriendly intention to Bro. Davis. But the truth is, his words are taken as a text by acrimonious critics ; by brawling scolds, whose disease has become chronic ; and, it may be, by fierce demoniacs. We are rudely assailed as enemies of religious liberty,

guilty of a studied attempt to demoralize Spiritualism by founding a new sect in theology and religion—*the very thing the writer has been contending against for forty years*. Some of these believers threaten us with perpetual war. They are determined to give us no peace unless we seek it by personal humiliation and repentance, or purchase the same at the cost of our honest convictions. What these malignants virtually demand is submission to their authority. We shall probably remain impenitent. We can not accept the guidance of these valiant knights whose chief occupation is battling with wind-mills, and wrestling fearfully with the phantoms evolved from their own disordered brains.

Some people seem delighted when they can find “a bone to pick;” it enables them to show their teeth. If we have furnished one for the time, let those gnaw the same who like the occupation. This bone is probably larger than some; at the same time it may be as lean and not more nutritious than that imaginary bone for which—on a memorable occasion—

“Old mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard.”

Yet on such food do envious busybodies, and mischievous meddlers with other people's affairs, contrive to subsist. It is not strange that they grow lean in spirit and wolfish in disposition. The pit opens in the path of all spiteful souls, and images with glaring eyes and gory locks haunt the presence of the man who “hateth his brother.” There are men of perverted minds, whose hearts are full of bitterness; men of base feeling, vulgar manners, rude speech and malicious purposes, who sow discord and stir up strife. A Christian Apostle refers to them when he says, “Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.” (Rom. iii: 13, 14.) Such men are not

only regardless of the social amenities and moral obligations of life, but they are disturbers of the peace of society. A man may be a saint and be stung by a scorpion. Even a gadfly may pester a lion ; while, out of the faithless bosom, a serpent may lift his venomous head and strike,—

“ At everything that glistens fair and white.”

While the divine realities of all the past are reproduced in our time, it is no less true that the unclean phases and distorted features of the world's moral history and spiritual experience, are being repeated in our presence. The gates of heaven stand ajar while hell yawns at our feet. There is a realm of the infernal that interpenetrates our sphere and especially belongs to this world of conflicting interests and selfish passions. Cerberus keeps his kennel and barks at every well-behaved traveler. He stretches himself at length before the gates of the *Limbus Fatuorum* and demands his bone in the shape of everlasting contention. The disorderly forces of the world are ever recruited from beneath. Uprising from the pit—ghastly and terrible, begrimed with smoke from infernal fires—they come !

“ Contention bold, with iron lungs,
And Slander with her hundred tongues.”

Well, let Cerberus the dog growl, and bark, and gnaw the same old bone of contention ; for such, in sooth, is the constitution of the creature and the manner of his life.

“ Evil subsists in ceaseless strife and hate ;
This is its final fate :
Left to itself it shall at last expire
Like fire that meeteth fire.”

S. B. BRITTAN.

NEW YORK, *May 14*, 1880.

THE GRAND ARMY OF STRAW!

MY ANSWER TO HUDSON TUTTLE.

“If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion.”

I N his article on “Christian Spiritualism,” in the *Journal* of the fifteenth instant, Mr. Hudson Tuttle is pleased to interrogate me (other names are included) as to what I “desire to convey by the *term* Christian Spiritualism.” As it is not considered respectful to remain silent when one is directly questioned, I cheerfully answer in such manner and form as the facts and circumstances seem to require. I have sometimes had occasion to speak of *Rational Spiritualism*; but as I have never prefixed the word *Christian*, nor any other—except the one mentioned—for the purpose of qualifying my Spiritualism, it will be perceived that the inquiry—so far as the writer is personally concerned—is wholly impertinent. Brother Tuttle is at liberty to set up this man of straw, for a scarecrow out West, and he has our permission to train the whole army in his own way. Such effigies are not presumed to have any feeling, and so the aforesaid man may be knocked down at any time, and as often as the proprietor may find the occupation either a pleasant pastime or healthful exercise.

A few passages from Brother Tuttle’s article will suffice to illustrate the haughty and dictatorial spirit of a writer in whom a modest confidence would be more becoming. He makes no effort to restrain the expression of his contempt for gentlemen who, to say the least, are not his inferiors, either in intellectual ability, social position, moral integrity, or public influence. The following brief extracts will be quite sufficient for my purpose:

“It is a pitiable spectacle to see men stand before the public and deny

like school-boys. . . . After all these Christian Spiritualists [he only names Prof. Buchanan, Prof. Kiddle, Dr. Peebles, and S. B. Brittan] are no more Christians than those who reject the term. . . . They only desire to retain the name as a sham, and it is a sham that deceives nobody. You organize, and it is an organization on paper. It has no substance, no coherence. You have not Christianity, nor even the unenviable reputation of being Christian in the eyes of the churches. You have Spiritualism, dead with the dry-rot of aping respectability."

If this language is not intended to be offensive to the gentlemen to whom it is more especially addressed, then it would seem that the author expresses himself without any manifest purpose. Who are the persons who present such "a pitiable spectacle?" Who "stand before the world and deny like school boys?" Who are dealing in "shams?" Who are "aping respectability?" It is the only fair inference from his language that *he means the men whom he has named*. It is not my object to answer for others, but I may venture to say that not one of the parties referred to has made any such childish denial. No one has either attempted to hide his convictions, or to evade the personal responsibility which accompanies the open expression of his views. *Not one of these gentlemen wears the mask of a hypocrite, nor is it necessary to ape the attributes they are known to possess*. There is no excuse for representing that the honorable men whom he impolitely catechises, after the fashion of a country pedagogue, have done any such thing, or that they are capable of so demeaning themselves under any circumstances. Surely no name can honor such perversion of the truth, and the man who essays to be our teacher in moral philosophy should set a better example.

I have never presumed to call any man to account for his honest convictions, on any subject. Nor do I think it either necessary or desirable to have entire unanimity of opinion, even on questions of paramount importance. *What I have always regarded as indis-*

pensable, is unrestricted freedom of thought, and the inalienable right of private judgment. As we have no recognized authorities among Spiritualists—and are not likely to have any such arbitrary masters—to determine by any dogmatic and sharply defined standard what is, and what is not, orthodox, I still propose to exercise the freedom which is a most essential part of my Spiritualism. Hitherto the writer has never been fairly tried and convicted of heresy. It is true that on the groundless assumptions of several persons he has more than once been informally arraigned, condemned, and “church-mauled,” after the peculiar fashion which some call spiritual! (?) Of late, especially, we have been called to witness a spirit of intolerance, and a species of vituperative criticism, which have rarely been matched in the institutions of sectarian theology—which always have the decency to give a man a formal trial before he is condemned as a heretic. This illiberal conduct on the part of professed Spiritualists is all out of place among Reformers, and incongruous to the last degree. The people who thus cover the ugly visage of their bitter intolerance by using Spiritualism as a mask, *should make haste to pick up their Procrustean traps, buy a through ticket, and check their baggage to Rome.* The manifestation of such a spirit among our people is a source of extreme mortification to those whose Spiritualism has any rational significance.

If the writer’s memory is reliable, this is not the first time Bro. Tuttle has revealed his careless reading of those whom he has been pleased to criticise. It seems eminently proper that a spiritual teacher should keep his eyes open, leaving others, if they will, to “walk by faith.” Some authentic information may be of use, even to Bro. Tuttle, or any other man who may aspire to the dignity of leading the Army of Straw. Will our dissatisfied Brother be persuaded to undertake a course of preliminary reading? It would be of no little service in qualifying him for the work of just and

intelligent criticism. If he has a laudable desire to keep the rest of us on the right track, it seems to me that the first thing for him to do is to ascertain—from original sources of information—the real views of his contemporaries. If this communication serves to enlighten him in respect to one of the number, it will not have been in vain that he has questioned me, and that I have answered.

In speaking of Spiritualism, Bro. Tuttle tells us, boldly, that he would “carve over the portals of its temple the name of no worshiped God.” He must be poor indeed who has no God at all—not so much as an African fetich or a Chinese joss. Alas! Bro. Tuttle is in the desperate condition described as “*without God in the world!*” It is only possible that diligent search might reveal the presence of one brazen image. But as temples are usually supposed to be consecrated to the worship of some divinity, we can not see what in the world Bro. Tuttle wants of any temple. If there is no God in that part of Ohio, a place of worship would be useless as a white elephant, or that hypothetical “fifth wheel” on which, however, his argument against Christian Spiritualism is made to rotate. Perhaps he can sell out his stock in the temple of Spiritualism to some one who can make use of it. A few additional acres at Berlin Heights, or a small interest in a brick-yard, might be worth more than a whole temple to a man who has no God to worship. In granting a quitclaim he can still hold on to the copyright of his motto—“NO WORSHIPED GOD”—which he may carve in almost any other place, except “over the portals” of the Spiritual Temple, where it would seem to be most essentially out of place. *Let it be carved in the night, over the Atheist's grave!*

We call the reader to witness that we have provoked no unpleasant discussion with any man. We have treated no one uncivilly on account of his peculiar views; and only when subjected to un-

just criticism have we now and then spoken in our own defense. When Bro. Tuttle and a few others make up their minds to pursue their own respective courses, leaving other people to enjoy the same privilege—without the molestation of offensive speech and needless opposition—there will be no more personal controversies to foster the foul spirit of malevolence. To be just to all, we must respect the rights of the individual. Let every man believe as much or little as he will ; have his own God and worship him after the manner which best accords with his religious convictions and personal convenience. Bro. Tuttle has no right to object to this, and we trust that on due reflection he will be reconciled to have it so. Why refuse to others what he claims for himself? In the interest of peace and Brotherhood, we are ready to make all reasonable concessions ; but *we demand the privilege of minding our own business without the impertinent interference of any one.* We shall not engage in any new holy war, unless we are forced into the attitude of a belligerent. While we have no disposition to dogmatize, we will not conceal the fact that we have a choice among the Gods of the modern Pantheon. We should much prefer the Christian's infinitely wise and loving Father to Atheism, or the "*no worshiped God*" of Bro. Tuttle. We are not inclined to bow before any pantheistic divinity. If compatible with the peace of the Spiritual Zion, grant us the privilege of worshipping some ideal that is not beneath the human conception of the divine. This would do Bro. Tuttle good also, since a rational reverence promotes a becoming modesty. We must confess that we never did have much respect for the molecular-attraction-hyper-galvanic-principle-physical-and-moral-necessity-Know-Nothing-God, of our would-be philosophers, who are supposed by some to be "*aping*" the "*respectability*" of modern science. Now, Brother, it is of no use to multiply questions in the same captious spirit. Further labor in this direction will probably be fruitless, as

“ The toil
Of dropping buckets into empty wells.”

In conclusion Bro. Tuttle exhorts Spiritualists to “discard educational and religious prejudices.” He would not add “another sect to the swarm that have buzzed like bumble bees and June bugs their brief day!” And yet, for no other reason than an honest difference of opinion, he questions the integrity of gentlemen and treats them with undisguised contempt. Our Western critic seems disposed to do the preaching and leave us to practice. He finds it difficult to follow his own counsel. His advice to “discard . . . religious prejudices,” is good, though it does come from a man who—all through his last sermon—is careful to use a small c for Christian and Christianity, while he as invariably employs capital initial letters for Mohammedan and Buddhistic. Behold, how great are the Heathen! It is just possible that there is, even here, a trace of something like sectarian prejudice, and a bigoted disposition to belittle the Christian name.

“How use doth breed a habit in a man.”

S. B. BRITTAN.

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, WARREN CO., N. J., }
June 19, 1880. }

THE OFFERED EXPLANATION.

A POET CLAIMS HIS LICENSE IN HIS LOGIC.

MY ANSWER TO J. O. BARRETT.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

IN your paper of the date of the 31st ultimo I find a letter from Bro. J. O. Barrett, who entertains the opinion that in my treatment of our Spiritual Guests the undersigned "contradicts much of his historical data." It appears from the title-line of your correspondent's letter that he wants me to "explain." To do this understandingly it will be necessary to reproduce the following passage from his letter :

"If I understand him, he rejects the generally-conceded theory of philosophy of *embodied* or materialized spiritual entities; claiming that what so appear as real are only mental pictures, psychic registries or thought as conceived by ruling spirits, acting on the brains of their subjects. . . . Mr. Brittan is too candid and too well posted to allow any such sweeping conclusion, and yet his argument certainly covers it."

It is very evident that Bro. Barrett does *not* understand me. In the exposition of my philosophy of the facts referred to I made an explicit statement and classification of such facts as are ordinarily embraced under the head of materializations. Let me restate the basis of this classification in the briefest manner possible.

1. The revelation of spirit forms by the opening of the interior or Spiritual Vision of the observer, in which case we see spirits as they see each other.
2. The Psycho-Sensorial Impressions, or cerebro-mental pictures, produced by the direct action of spirits on the human mind agreeably to psychological laws.
3. The Transfigurations, or the cases in which the spirit takes possession of the medium and so changes the facial lines as to

represent an image, more or less distinct, of the earthly features and expression of the spirit.

4. The examples which neither depend on the opening of the inward vision, nor on the physiological power and agency of spirits, but *on their admitted ability to clothe themselves with Material Vestments*, the elements of which are drawn from the medium, from the bodies of other persons, and from the atmosphere.

Can anything be made clearer than this recognition of *four distinct classes of facts*? Yet with this explicit statement before him your correspondent gravely informs your readers—in respect to the visible forms of spirits—that I “claim that what so appear as real are *only mental pictures, psychic registries of thought as conceived by ruling spirits, acting on the brains of their subjects.*” Bro. Barrett calls on me for an explanation, while he is heedless of what I have written. My plain statement that the phenomena referred to are neither all of the same kind, *modo et formá*, nor in respect to the philosophy of their causation; that the essential characteristics of the facts, in each and every case, must, in my judgment, determine their classification in at least *four separate divisions*, which were clearly enough defined in my lecture—all this is overlooked; and Mr. Barrett utterly disregards all I have said respecting three of the four classes of the facts embraced in my specification. Violating all the principles of logic and rules of language, he insists that “his [my] argument certainly covers” the “sweeping conclusion” that all the facts are “only mental pictures.” From this it appears that he is not familiar with the contents of my lecture, while he has carefully studied the adverse criticisms, in which my real position is totally misrepresented.

If the absurdity of Bro. Barrett's conclusion is not already sufficiently apparent, an illustration or two will suffice to settle the question in the mind of the reader. Suppose a man, in preparing

a schedule of his real and personal estate, should thus make a record of the same :

1. United States Government Bonds.
2. Mining and Petroleum Stocks.
3. First Mortgages on Real Estate.
4. Live Stock, Farming Implements and Household Furniture.

Now, what would be thought of a man who, after carefully looking over the foregoing schedule, should gravely assume that this document covered and justified the conclusion that the man's entire property *consisted of Mining and Petroleum Interests?*

Again : Suppose Bro. Barrett should write a letter to the *Banner of Light* concerning the performance of a Quartette, giving a particular description of all the parts—Tenor, Soprano, Alto and Basso—with critical observations on the laws of harmonics. Now what would he think of me if, after perusing his letter, I should take occasion to solemnly assure your readers that his description of the Quartette warranted the conclusion that there was but one singer present and but one part performed, and that was the Bass? Will friend Barrett please take notice that in my classification of the phenomena, comprehended under the general title of the Materialization of Spirits in *four separate divisions*, all the parts in the quartette are represented? Now, if J. O. B. can rise from the narrow and incomplete conception he has formed of my philosophy, and so enlarge his view as to embrace the other three parts, he will be all right, and may at last discover the harmony of the whole.

More than a third of a century has elapsed since I abandoned the old dogma of the resurrection of the corporeal body—the mortal remains of Jesus included. After the learned treatise of the late Rev. Prof. George Bush, and the luminous contributions of other eminent writers, I did not suppose that any enlightened believer in Spiritualism now really entertained that idea; but I was probably mistaken. Bro. Barrett still seems to hold on, with a deathless

tenacity, to that same old dogma of the bodily resurrection, at least for one man; and if for one, why not for all? Our friend is not staggered by the natural and scientific impossibilities in the way of such a resurrection. In my humble opinion it is too late for Spiritual Reformers to waste time in the discussion of such a question.

An apple-tree was planted long ago by the grave of the venerable Roger Williams. It is said to be a fact, established by ocular demonstration, that the tree sent down a tap-root into his coffin, and spreading a fine, fibrous net-work over his mortal remains, literally took up—by the natural process of assimilation—every vestige of his body. His chemical constituents were converted into sweet blossoms and delicious fruits; and whoever was disposed to do so, ate the apples. His very skeleton entered into the living flesh and blood and bones of the community. We will not speculate about his more unsubstantial and volatile elements—gelatine, albumen, and ammonia; but in the resurrection how will that righteous old soul ever find his own scattered phosphates and carbonates, since there are so many later proprietors to dispute his claim?

S. B. BRITTAN,

BELVIDERE SEMINARY, WARREN CO., N. J., }
Aug. 1, 1880. }

APPENDIX D.

BEFORE THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

EDITOR-AT-LARGE WORK UNDER DISCUSSION.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JAN. 8, 1881.

AT the Harvard Rooms, in New York, on the last Sunday of the old year, the regular session of the Spiritual Conference was one of unusual interest. MR. CHARLES D. LAKEY, proprietor and publisher of the *American Builder*, delivered a ringing speech on the work of the Editor-at-Large. Our special reporter has furnished us with what he is pleased to call the *skeleton* of Mr. Lakey's eloquent and forcible address. Just now the exhibition of this anatomy should interest all of our readers who may be looking about for the opportunity to make a profitable investment. The reader will perceive that this is no very naked skeleton. On the contrary, it displays muscle, mind, and motion, while it is warmed and animated by something like a vital flame. If any one is still cold in his chronic indifference to this important work, he may warm himself by the true fire which an earnest spirit kindles.

MR. LAKEY'S SPEECH BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.

I never had but one objection to this Editor-at-Large project, and that was, the name. Knowing Dr. BRITAN as an able journalist, and having some knowledge as well of the press of this country, I never for one moment doubted that he would be successful.

It is a mistake to suppose that the journalism of to-day is but a reflex of public opinion. That the press is and always has been conservative, I do not deny ; that it likes to be on the popular side of great questions, is apparent to all. But the man who stands at the helm of a great newspaper in these modern times is not at heart a bad man. He is the product of the civilization of to-day. He is not a religionist. Over him superstition holds no sway. He is broad in his views of men and things. He believes that right is better than might ; truth than falsehood ; and, as

“ Humanity sweeps onward toward the circle of the younger day,”

he from his elevated position gathers inspiration, and grows into sympathy with whatever helps lift up the race. A great newspaper has large financial interests to be looked after, and at times its course may seem to antagonize the right ; but give it a chance, and it will show that it is not in sympathy with wrong, and above all, that it does believe in fair play.

Spiritualism is a great religion, coming down out of the heavens to bless this world. Men do not welcome a new religion. They try to suppress it, to Herod it out of existence. In olden times fire and sword, rack and thumbscrew were brought into requisition to destroy that which the gods had ordained should live. To-day no such means are available; and yet the means employed are ten times more powerful, for they consist of appeals to the judgment and to the heart. Spiritualism is a religion of living facts ; facts unanswerable, that are born to it with each new day of its life. From the very first its enemies have sought to break the force of these facts by appeals through the public press. For a quarter of a century there was a general denial ; the facts did not exist ; and when the testimony as to the facts became perfectly overwhelming, resort was had to misrepresentation. And I undertake to say that no system of religion or philosophy has ever been so vilely slandered as Spiritualism. The pulpits of the land have rung with the falsest of charges. And what wonder if, amid the falling pillars of a faith on which subsistence depended, men everywhere should implore the aid of that great engine, the press. They have been doing this for years with more or less success. Nor should it be thought strange that statements coming from sources of influence, that were a sort of guarantee of their truth, should, however much of falsehood they might contain, often find their way into the daily newspaper.

It was to help counteract such influences as these that Dr. S. B. Brittan modestly began his work one year ago, in the full belief that the press of this country was in favor of fair play. I need not tell you that he

has been eminently successful ; this you already know. The great daily press has received his contributions and scattered them broadcast. His articles have been timely ; shells from a rifled cannon, falling with unerring certainty into the camp of the enemy. When " a minister of the gospel " in our neighboring city of Brooklyn slanders us in his pulpit before an audience of two thousand people, our Editor-at-Large smites him before an audience of seventy-five thousand in the Brooklyn *Eagle*. Almost without exception, where an insidious attack on Spiritualists has been smuggled into the columns of an influential newspaper, Dr. Brittan has been allowed to have his say ; the antidote has followed the poison ; and when he applies such an antidote no man dare suggest that he does not belong to the regulars.

So efficient have been these services that it has been thought advisable to keep Dr. Brittan in office. Funds are wanted for this purpose. Can any doubt that money thus expended will be put to good use ? Let us see. Suppose a business man found it necessary to correct through the press false statements concerning his affairs, and it required fifteen thousand lines to do the work. Ordinarily the cost of such matter would vary but little from a dollar a line when paid for as an advertisement, to say nothing about the cost of labor in preparing the matter. I have written many columns for weekly papers that were paid for at this rate. The cost, then, to the business man would be in the neighborhood of \$15,000. But Dr. Brittan has had printed within the past year, in defense of Spiritualism, matter that would make about fifteen thousand lines if it had been charged for as an advertisement. Not one cent has been paid for its insertion, and all he has received for his services has been about \$1,300, less some two hundred dollars necessary incidental expenses of the service.

Look at his work from another point of view—from a more elevated position, where we get a more commanding outlook. The church spends millions of dollars annually for the propagation of the Christian faith. The expenses of a city church, with an average attendance of one thousand people, are seldom, if ever, less than \$15,000 in the aggregate. In many instances, of course, the cost is immensely greater. The Rev. John Hall, I believe, gets a salary of \$20,000. Now, the pastor of such a church, if he didn't go off yachting or fishing in the summer, would in one year preach one hundred and four sermons. He would speak chiefly to one congregation ; but if he had a new congregation on every occasion, he could say at the end of the year that he had presented his views of the truth to one hundred and four thousand people.

Now then, I will assume that one of Dr. Brittan's articles is worth as

much in defense of Spiritualism as any single sermon is worth in defense of Orthodoxy. Is this fair? Yes? Very well. Then estimate the value of Dr. Brittan's article in the Boston *Herald*, which is seen and read by more than three hundred thousand people! on the supposition that one paper is read by three persons. One article, which could hardly have cost Spiritualists more than forty dollars, is more effective than all the preaching of a city pastor during three years. Where the city pastor, under the most favorable conditions, reaches one hundred thousand people in a year—and this he never can do speaking to the same congregation—your Editor-at-Large in one day speaks to three hundred thousand.

Such papers as the Boston *Herald*, Rochester *Democrat*, Toronto *Mail*, Cincinnati *Enquirer*, Boston *Transcript*, Hartford *Times*, and many others of large circulation and influence, have opened their columns freely to hear what we have to say in defense of our sublime truths. We can well afford to keep this veteran journalist at his good work. Now that the opportunity comes, let it not be said that Spiritualists were indifferent to the needs of the time. All honor to a press that has shown its independence of a false public sentiment, and that has been willing to hear both sides of a question second in importance to none that has ever stirred the heart of humanity. I say: Let the good work go on.

“ There is a light about to beam,
 There is a fount about to stream,
 There is a midnight blackness
 Changing into gray ;
 Aid the dawning, tongue and pen,
 Aid it, hopes of honest men,
 Aid it, paper, aid it, type,
 Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
 And our earnest must not slacken
 Into play.
 Men of thought and men of action,
 Clear the way ! ”

DR. BRITTAN'S ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS.

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN NEW YORK, 1881.

CLAIMS OF THE SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.

SPIRITUALISM is older than the Egyptian obelisk, and looks down on us from an eminence above the Pyramids. The evidences of its phenomena run back through the shadowy past until they are lost in pre-historic periods. In every age some voice has spoken, vaguely perhaps, out of the darkness, to admonish us that visible forms are not all of life, and that tangible substances do not embrace the more essential and substantial elements of Being. Everywhere a *great hand* with index finger points back along the line of material causation, until that line fades out in the distance before our imperfect vision. At last, the whole chain of physical causation dissolves in our grasp, and we are left face to face with an Invisible World! As spiritual phenomena, in some form, necessarily accompany all human existence, and, to say the least, have occurred in every period within the limits of authentic history, we can scarcely make a mistake in celebrating the anniversary of Spiritualism on almost any day that may best suit the convenience of our people. Whether there is any special propriety in celebrating its advent to-day, is a question of secondary importance, which I do not propose to discuss.

I am rather here to consider the methods by which the present interests and final triumphs of our cause may be most effectually advanced and accomplished. It has been suggested that I should occupy the few moments accorded to me by the courtesy of your Committee in making some brief explanatory observations concerning the peculiar work of the SECULAR PRESS BUREAU. Let no one make the mistake of supposing that this is exclusively *my work*.

No ; I can not justly claim so much honor for myself. This eminently practical and important enterprise originated in the Spirit-World. In the most essential sense it is the work of all spirits and mortals who have thus far contributed either words of encouragement, spiritual influence, or material means for its advancement. The most I can claim for myself is that I have the honor to be the servant of this noble company. In this broad view of the subject, I trust I may speak to you freely, without the restraint which a person of ordinary modesty naturally feels in referring to himself and his labors.

From the beginning of the present movement Spiritualism has been obliged to contend with an unscrupulous opposition. The enemy has employed every available means to mislead the public mind in respect to its real merits and the amazing magnitude of its proportions. For more than thirty years that opposition—inspired at once by the dogmatic theology of the church, the scientific materialism of the schools, and the popular skepticism of the times—has used the secular press to dispute and misinterpret the facts; to misrepresent our principles and practices before the world; to conceal and pervert the truth; to caricature innocent persons and public assemblies; to excite a feeling of disgust at the mere mention of the name and of contempt for our most sacred convictions; to denounce all mediums as unprincipled tricksters, and to defame the honest disciples of a great but unpopular truth. No systematic attempt was made to roll back this foul tide of misrepresentation of the noblest principles and malicious abuse of unoffending people.* It was left to set like a spring freshet through all the principal channels of popular thought and general intelligence. Only here

* In this remark we must be understood as making honorable exception of the important labors of the spiritualistic press and platform which, to a great extent, have been characterized by an earnest spirit and admirable method.

and there some man of unusual personal influence was able to obtain a respectful hearing in any public journal of wide circulation and commanding influence. So few were the exceptions to the rule, that, so recently as 1879—when the question of the Secular Press Bureau began to be agitated—it was confidently predicted by influential Spiritualists that the experiment would end in failure; that the space necessary for a proper statement and defense of our views could not be had in the secular papers, especially in those of large circulation. It was boldly declared that we should be forced to purchase the requisite space at “advertising rates.” Those people believed, we must presume, that the spirit of prophecy was upon them, and that their words would be verified. But they were mistaken. I am not here to question their sincerity, to cast suspicion upon their motives, or to say a single unkind word of any one who may have honestly entertained this conviction.

But I am reminded that the occasion calls for some acknowledgment to the Secular Press. It is doubtless our fault, as a people, that we did not receive more respectful attention at an earlier period. What had we done to command recognition? We had never placed any declaration of principles before the world. We were not wanting in the visible elements necessary to constitute a great body; but there was no common law of cohesive attraction to bind them together. We were so intensely *individualized* that there was neither unity of purpose nor concert of action among the people. If we were agreed on any one thing, it was that each should have his own way every time, and without any embarrassing reference to the common welfare. In the public apprehension, and in fact, we were not a united people, but only a very harmless and well-behaved mob. For almost a third of a century we had failed to make any concerted, intelligent and determined attempt to show through the press of the country that we were in earnest in our demand to be heard for the sake of our Cause.

When at last the experiment was made, we soon discovered that there was more real manhood in the sanctum than the editorial chair was credited with by some of our prominent Spiritualists. Justice demands the acknowledgment that, personally, and as a representative of Spiritualism, I have met with many evidences of respectful consideration, and often with a high sense of honor, that does not always characterize the papers ostensibly devoted to the religious and *spiritual* interests of mankind. For a period of over thirty years—in spite of the common prejudice against Spiritualism and all my reputed heresies—I have been treated with uniform hospitality by the journalists of the secular press in every part of the United States, and, indeed, wherever the English language is spoken. I trust I shall not be suspected of personal vanity in saying, to the honor of the press, so much as is demanded by the moral law of reciprocal justice.

It was in 1879 that the resolution was formed—at the instigation of the Spirit-World—to make a determined effort to use the secular press for the purpose of more fully informing the public mind respecting the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism. The correspondence of the Editor-at-Large was almost everywhere kindly received, promptly published, and otherwise treated with the utmost respect. Of the entire series of letters contributed by the Bureau to the Secular Press, in the year 1880, *there are only three that have not been published in some influential secular paper.* In several instances the editors have relinquished much of the space in the editorial department to make room for this correspondence. The letters have very rarely occupied less than a column—often two or three times that space, and in some instances have extended to seven or eight columns. My good friend, MR. CHARLES D LAKEY—well known as an experienced journalist and as the Editor and Proprietor of the *American Builder*—estimates that, at the proper advertising rates, the columns which this correspondence

occupied the first year have a commercial value of \$15,000; and yet not the first dime has been paid for this space!

In this correspondence the enemies of Spiritualism have been fearlessly arraigned; error, hypocrisy and falsehood have been unmasked, and the general subject freely discussed; always, I believe, in respectful language, and with a just regard to the essential dignity of the subject. To-day Spiritualism meets its enemies in the largest intellectual and moral arena on earth—the *newspaper press of the United States!* Thus a great door has been opened, wide enough to admit the boldest champion of the Future—opened—if you will have it so—to be closed no more!

Friends: this is a more significant victory than many people may imagine. That beautiful Spiritualist who came out of Nazareth was something more than thirty years old when he was crucified. Modern Spiritualism—according to your record of its birth—is about the same age. Spiritualism has also been derided, despised and spit upon; even its most blameless disciples have been viewed with suspicion, and punished with social ostracism for their honest convictions. Many a sensitive medium has found his or her way leading up the rugged steep of some moral Calvary. Not a few of the early champions of this cause have tasted the “wormwood and gall;” and the “crown of thorns” is quite too real to belong to sacred history alone. But the long impending crisis is here. Once more “the veil of the temple is rent.” The great truth—always strong in latent forces, and enduring forever—is mightier now than ever before. Its final triumph is assured. Even now, without giving up the ghost, Spiritualism descends from the cross! The white flag of the Immortals, already unfurled above the Spiritual Battle-ground, is emblazoned with the symbols of victory!

When people are invited to contribute money for any purpose, they naturally desire to clearly comprehend the object, and to be

satisfied that the apprehended results will warrant the proposed expenditure. A single illustration will enable you to settle this question, in its relation to the different methods employed in the diffusion of spiritual knowledge. Let us presume that we have one hundred public assemblies convened to-day, and on each succeeding Sunday, to listen to the teachings from the Spiritual platform. Suppose that these assemblies average two hundred and fifty persons (this is probably a large estimate); this would give us a total of twenty-five thousand people convened to listen to the Sunday lecture in one hundred different places. Now should you publish the lecture in a paper with the circulation which the Boston *Herald* is known to possess; and if an average of three persons should read each copy, or hear it read, the message would reach no less than three hundred and ten thousand persons. This number is *more than twelve times as many as would listen to its utterance from the one hundred platforms.*

The comparative expense of the two methods is a no less suggestive feature of the subject. In our large cities it probably costs some fifty dollars a Sunday to keep up the meetings—to compensate the speaker, pay rent, advertising and other incidental expenses. But let us make the modest estimate that the one hundred public meetings only involve an entire average expense of \$20 for each and every Sunday. This would give \$2,000 as the aggregate cost of the one hundred platform services for a single day. The man who should prepare the same matter for the *Herald* might be satisfied if he received *one-fortieth part of that sum*; and yet instead of his labors being limited to an audience of say 25,000, he would probably reach and influence more than a quarter of a million! But if we assume that not more than an average of *one person* will read each copy of the paper, he would still deliver his message to over 103,000 souls, or *more than four times as many as would listen to the one hundred speakers*; and all this

additional publicity for one-fortieth part of the actual cost of the platform method of teaching. The facts confirmed by our limited experience would perhaps warrant a stronger statement. It is estimated that during the first year of our work, the Secular Press Bureau Correspondence reached 2,000,000 of people at the very small cost to the subscribers of \$1,300, which is *less than three per centum on the actual expense of the other principal method employed for the diffusion of spiritual knowledge.*

I have not presented this striking contrast in respect to the relative efficiency and economy of our principal methods of teaching because I would dispense with the spiritual platform. *By no means.* A great cause, so much misunderstood, cannot afford to abandon the platform where its just claims may be elucidated, and the magnetic presence accompany the spoken word with the "demonstrations of the spirit and power." Nevertheless, in the light of the facts submitted, we shall be able to understand *why* it is that the pulpit has lost its prestige. The time was, within the memory of some of my hearers, when the human mind was under the guidance of the pulpit; when the minister of the parish set the fashion of popular sentiment; but that time has gone, nevermore to return in the history of this people. *Now the press is the great educator.*

The real facts in the case are so remarkable that they should command instant and thoughtful attention. It is only through the secular press that we can hope to reach the skeptical classes, who most especially need to be enlightened on the great questions of the Spiritual Reformation. The secular press is already firmly established on a capital of many millions. It possesses the public confidence and commands immense facilities for the wide diffusion of all desirable information. It reaches the whole community as no other human instrumentality ever can. Shall we turn this powerful engine to account for Truth's sake? Shall we open its manifold channels and pour a flood of spiritual light through them

to illuminate the nations? If we are so disposed, there is no power in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, that will hinder the execution of our purpose.

Now, friends, what do you propose to do about it? We should do something worthy of our great opportunity, and not leave the spirits to perform all the labor. The man who is able to do the most for this cause—most to elevate and illuminate the world—is the most fortunate of men. His unselfish work for humanity must lift him up into loving fellowship with the purest and noblest natures. Nor will he be obliged to wait until he goes to another world for his reward. *The blessing comes in the generous deed.* And then, there is a kind of poetic justice in this world, that will not permit a truly noble nature, like PETER COOPER, for example, to be lost to the world's remembrance. Always those who labor the most unselfishly for mankind are revered while living, and at last they find an imperishable mausoleum in the affections of those whom their wisdom may have exalted and their heavenly charities uplifted and redeemed. The world soon forgets its merchant princes who devote long lives to unworthy schemes of personal aggrandizement; but the names and memories of the world's benefactors and redeemers are tenderly cherished, and their bays are green when oblivion mercifully draws her veil over the record of the sordid soul.

Finally, in your efforts to enlighten mankind by extending a knowledge of the truth, I venture to express the hope that you will not lose sight of the claims of the Secular Press Bureau. Believe me, friends, the grandest of all instruments is ready at our hands, and it may be used for the noblest of all human purposes. The Secular Press is a gigantic telephone that speaks with numberless tongues all over the world. It has a voice in every household in the land. Its polyglot embraces all languages. Its printed leaves are numerous as the leaves of the forest. They rustle in the air around us; they scintillate in every dark place, and their light—

like the rays of a vertical sun—falls everywhere. If we are sufficiently awake to the necessities of the times; if we are really worthy of such a glorious inheritance of spiritual freedom and knowledge; then the Angel of the New Dispensation—through an inspired and living discipleship—shall lay his mighty hand on this great Engine of Light, Liberty and Progress. This done, and we shall have moved the lever that moves the world!

APPENDIX E.

OPINIONS OF DISTINGUISHED SPIRITUALISTS.

HAVING accorded the adverse witnesses a fair and patient hearing—and more space in this volume than the nature of their opposition really seems to merit—it is eminently proper that the friends of the SECULAR PRESS BUREAU should be heard in its behalf. Accordingly we give place to the following testimony of several eminent friends :

From Hon. Nelson Cross to the Editor of the Banner of Light.

It was with great unanimity that DR. S. B. BRITTAN was chosen to discharge the duties of an office or occupation which for the want of a better title was denominated as "*Editor-at-Large*. . . . It would seem that a good share of the opposition to the new enterprise, which manifested itself at an early day, proceeded from a misconception of what was to be implied from the use of a cognomen which naturally suggested some supervisory control over the press, or of the writings of others designed for publication ; whereas, in fact, the name was restricted to its most limited sense—to wit, *to write and to publish*, without regard to any particular vehicle of communication, except as it might be suggested by its appropriateness to the particular subject under review ; the object being, so far as the liberality of publishers would allow, to answer the defamers of Spiritualism in their own columns.

That there should have been any serious opposition on the part of professed Spiritualists to the plan of providing a means of refuting in some fit and convincing manner the slanderous misstatements of the opposition, concerning the religion and philosophy of Spiritualism, was not a little surprising to those of us who were instrumental in bringing it about. It certainly could do the cause no harm, and there was ground for belief that it might be productive of great good. And so long as those only who favored the project were called upon to contribute to its success, it was

thought that others who differed with them in opinion would be satisfied to observe its effects upon the spiritual cause, advantageous or otherwise, before arraying themselves in hostility to it.

The eminent qualifications of Prof. Brittan to discharge in the best way the manifold duties of Editor-at-Large, have never been called in question. Had not his self-sacrifice and devotion to the cause, *first*, of liberal Christianity, and afterward of Spiritualism, left him in his declining years comparatively poor, he too might offer (as some, for reasons best known to themselves, have already done), to do the work *gratuitously*, for which his thirty-four years of constant labor in the same field have preëminently qualified him. But while others, whose achievements have been no greater, have received gratuities made up of voluntary contributions, that they should not want, is it indeed so unreasonable that the Editor-at-Large should be paid for his work a sum which is really insufficient, after all, to supply his daily wants?

The exhaustive articles of Prof. Brittan, put forth in his new capacity, whether in advocacy of the spiritual belief or in refutation of many of the virulent attacks upon it through miscellaneous publications, religious and secular, have been numerous and widespread. Nor have these articles been mainly promulgated through spiritualistic organs. On the contrary, they have, in almost every instance, been admitted to the columns of leading opposition papers, and to such an extent that it is not too much to affirm that they have already been laid before upwards of a million of readers, few of whom could have been reached in any other way.

I do not gather from anything that has been said that there was any disagreement as to the qualifications of Dr. Brittan to perform in the best manner the duties to which he was assigned. It is not too much to affirm in this connection that the summary of literary work performed by the Editor-at-Large in the first twelve months of his engagement is alike creditable to him and to the cause which for upwards of thirty years he has so ably sustained. There can be no division of sentiment upon this point, and the value of his work once conceded, it is incumbent on the friends of the cause to put forth every effort that may be practical for its support and continuance.

NELSON CROSS.

194 Broadway, New York City.

From Prof. William Denton, the Eminent Scientist and Spiritualist.

WELLESLEY, MASS., Oct. 26th, 1880.

To the Editor-at-Large Committee :

Gentlemen,—The appointment of our friend, S. B. BRITTAN, to the

position of Editor-at-Large, was one of the best means ever employed for the promulgation of spiritual ideas among the body of the people. In no other way can we as readily reach the thinkers of our country. I have seen abundant evidence of the great value of his correspondence to the secular press—as I felt sure it would be when I first read of the proposition that he should become Editor-at-Large.

Mr. Brittan's long editorial experience; his superior mental culture, combined with a knowledge of Spiritualism second to that of no living man, render him a preëminently proper person for the work, which has thus far been carried on in a way most eminently to further the ends desired. I trust that his valuable services will be secured for his further continuance in one of the most important fields in which a man can be employed.

Yours for progress,

WILLIAM DENTON.

From Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten to the Editor of the Banner of Light.

“It has long seemed to me a reproach on the Spiritualists of America that Prof. Brittan, one of the earliest and most indefatigable pioneers of the movement, one of its most brilliant writers and philosophic thinkers, should have so long been permitted to remain in comparative obscurity, and to waste his splendid talents on fugitive and ill-sustained efforts to promote the great work of progress. If faithful service and an unstained life, too, can add prestige to his high literary attainments, Prof. Brittan's reëntree to his legitimate sphere of editorial labor should be hailed by all true Spiritualists, as it is by me, with a cordial all-hail of welcome!”

From Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, formerly American Minister to Portugal.

THE SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

We claim our millions of Spiritualists; and Spiritualists are all thinking men, most of them earnest ones. We all desire the spread of our grand and glorious faith, which is freighted with blessing for life and for eternity to every new recipient of it. We are astonished at the ignorant blindness of those who will not open their eyes to the celestial light of its evidences, and indignant at the scornful ostracism of which Spiritualism is the object on the part of the vast majority, composed of mere routine religionists, sense-bound materialists, and thoughtless indifferentists, living

for the interests and concerns of this short span of life alone. We all look forward with confidence to the coming time, when the light now only a rising dawn on the horizon of our modern civilization, shall illumine and regenerate the world, differing from the sun in that it will then know no setting.

We know that our Spiritualist papers, precious and dear as they may be to ourselves, reach but few occasional readers beyond the circle of those who need no convincing. I have heard no estimate beyond forty or fifty thousand subscribers for the whole of them together. Yet here we have the mortification of reading in the last *Banner of Light* your article on the fourth page, headed "Trial of Spiritualism and its Enemies," referring to Prof. Brittan's splendid reply to Dr. Hawley in the *Saratoga Eagle*, entitled "Trial of Spiritualism and its Enemies," and on the eighth page the beggarly account of subscriptions for the support of the "Secular Press Bureau" under Prof. Brittan's zealous and masterly direction, amounting thus far for this year only to about \$800 (for the whole of last year it reached only that of about \$1,300), while his cash outlay cannot be less than \$300. And in each of these two years the noble contribution from some anonymous donor (only one, but a Spiritualist indeed), was \$500. These subscriptions ought not in any year to fall short of at least \$5 000.

Estimating an average of three readers per number issued by the secular papers which published his articles last year, Prof. Brittan brought the defense of our Spiritualism before probably not less than two millions of readers, few of whom would otherwise have ever read a word of our evidences and arguments. He addresses the secular editors only when they have written or admitted to their columns articles of hostility against us which furnish a fair ground for appeal to their justice for the privilege of a reply. And his tone is always so courteous, his style so elegant, his knowledge of the subject so broad and thorough, and his reasoning so lucid and logical, that no small number of them feel that they are gracing their columns while honoring themselves by the act of fair play in publishing his masterly answers in our behalf. His work is incomparably the most important and valuable that is now being carried on through this potent engine for moving worlds—the Press. Every true Spiritualist ought to "hold up the hands" of such a worker engaged in such a service, and thus to take his own part in helping the doing of it. There are many thousands among our own number, to whom it would be a small matter to economize a dollar a year to support, encourage and *extend* the operation of this "Secular Press Bureau," which I am glad to see you substitute as a title for that of "Editor-at-Large." This Bureau ought to have a couple of

good rooms, a good short-hand writer to receive dictation, and two or three assistants for copying and other collaboration, under Prof. Brittan's direction. He could then do, I am sure, tenfold the large amount of work now accomplished, and with a mind so relieved from care and mechanical labor, that it would be even improved in quality. Surely the appeal which speaks in this mere suggestion of the facts which experience has now established, cannot be in vain.

Very respectfully, J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

59 *Lexington Avenue, New York, March 12th.*

“ THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE.”

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I am glad to see that the “ Editor-at-Large ” project is meeting with substantial approval on the part of Spiritualists. I wish I were able to contribute largely to the fund required to carry it forward ; but lacking the material means, perhaps you will permit me to say an earnest word or two to such as are more fortunate in that respect.

It has seemed to me a very happy thought on the part of the originators of this project, whether in this sphere or a higher, to thus attempt to carry the war more vigorously into the enemy's lines, and at the same time to secure to the cause a more full measure of the services of one who has proved himself eminently fitted for this special work.

Surely no one acquainted with the labors of Dr. Brittan in behalf of Modern Spiritualism, antedating even the period usually assigned as the origin of the movement, can doubt his especial qualifications for the service for which he has been nominated. Nor can there be any question—in view of the facts that he early sacrificed the emoluments of a prominent position in an ecclesiastical body in order to advocate an unpopular truth, and has received no adequate pecuniary return for an ordinary lifetime of arduous toil—that in undertaking this service he should receive a suitable remuneration, such as will enable him to lay aside other avocations and devote his energies to this.

Of course no one is expected to contribute to this movement except those who see the desirableness of the work proposed, and who feel that Bro. Brittan is fully competent to its acceptable performance. Probably most Spiritualists, who are not professional writers or speakers, will feel that he is able to do the work far more satisfactorily than they themselves could do, even could they command the time. Certainly all such

have an undoubted right to employ him to act in their own behalf, if they see fit, and to compensate him for it if they choose.

It is difficult, then, to perceive the reasonableness of objections that have been raised against this proposal in certain quarters. I cannot but think its purpose and animus have been strangely misconceived by those brethren in the household who have imagined it to be a step toward popery, or a scheme to betray Spiritualism into the hands of its enemies, or even an eleemosynary project, contrived to give one Spiritualistic journal some advantage over others. Since the "Editor-at-Large" is invested with no control over anybody's opinions, or over any portion of the press, Spiritualistic or other, and since Bro. Brittan's veteran services in the cause give a guarantee of his future faithfulness at least as secure as we have on the part of any new-fledged advocate, and since, moreover, his productions are to be given to the public, when possible, through the channels of the opposition, it is not apparent how the project can result in any of the evils prognosticated. True, that journal (the *Banner of Light*) which has had the good judgment to encourage and aid this plan, is entitled to whatever credit for enterprise and generous public spirit may be justly due in the case; and this will doubtless be accorded by all right minded people, who, I am confident, will see no occasion for evil surmisings or petty jealousy in the matter.

Let, then, the good work go on. Let Dr. Brittan be supplied, by those who have the will and the means, with sufficient funds to relieve him from all pecuniary anxieties. Those who aid in this work will be sure of an abundant reward in the approval of their own consciences, and of that better world which rejoices in all unselfish effort. A. E. NEWTON.

ANCORA, N. J.

EDITOR-AT-LARGE FUND.

It gives us great pleasure to present the following letter to our readers. The noble response of the writer to our call for funds to place PROF. BRITTAN in a proper condition to carry into full effect the plan proposed, does honor to his head and heart. Although not written for publication, we feel that he has said what should be known, hence we hope he will excuse us for the liberty we have taken. If others respond sufficiently to warrant PROF. BRITTAN accepting the *Call to Duty*, at precisely the time when his services

are needed in the peculiar field mapped out for him by the Spirit World, and which he of all men in our ranks is most competent to fill, we shall feel that we have done our duty in the premises.

ED. B. OF L.

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO, Nov. 1, 1879.

Messrs. Colby & Rich, Boston, Mass. :

GENTLEMEN—In the noble effort to secure the services of Prof. S. B. Brittan, of New York, as a worker in the labor of love and the uplifting of humanity, I subscribe and hereby place in your hands one hundred dollars, for the proposed undertaking to raise a proper amount as salary, and so secure his aid in the field of the coming universal religion. There is no man more able, more willing to use his pen for the benefit of his kind than Dr. Brittan. May the lovelight from above warm up the hearts of those who are able to contribute to this much needed work at this time. *We must not fail in this.* Very truly yours,
 JEROME FASSLER, SR.

ENCOURAGING WORDS.

The following extracts are from letters received from a man of wealth engaged in extensive business. Not long ago he felt that the responsibilities of this life were too much for human nature to bear. Harnessed by the necessities of business to a multitude of cares and constant labors, his yoke was not easy and his burden was not light. He was impatient, and felt a strong inclination to retire from the scene of conflict. He did not feel equal to the battle of life, and would fain have been "mustered out of service." But Spiritualism has made a moral hero of this man, and invested his character with the attributes of the noblest type of manhood. He is still devoted to business, but with such higher aims and ends as are above all selfish considerations. While Spiritualism has given him manly strength, and made him resolute in his purpose to work unselfishly for humanity, it has also softened his nature, ennobled his life, and developed out of the depths of his interior be-

ing those loving affections which are the immortal bloom and glory of the spirit :

“ Brother, I am aware of some of your trials, sacrifices and sufferings ; but new work awaits you on the earth, which you must do before your passport will be given you. This I learn from those who know. . . There are many workers, and the work is for all humankind, in and out of the body. Look upward and wait a little ; you will do your work before you go home. You will certainly be released from ‘ the committee of ways and means.’ Dearest Brother, I have been in the crucible. No man could survive the trials I have passed through without help from above. In reaching upward I have clasped hands with my leaders. Bear up, my brother ; tenderly are you guarded by those who know you better than the world knows you. They will not fail you, but will help to do your work here. Cheer up, be strong, and fear nothing. *All is well!*”

“ ‘ Many are called, but few are chosen,’ because only the few do stand the fiery test. The weak ones are left behind. They must have more time to grow strong ; but the Father’s love is over all. In memory of one whose coming is celebrated, I enclose you a little present. He is near and dear to me, and the blessing comes in his name. While I have not forgotten you, neither are you forgotten by those that live in the spheres of Love and Truth. You are the object of tender affection, for the true heart that is within you is known to them. In their name do I speak to you and bid you to be strong. Keep your face to the sunlight. I know the watchful care that is over you. Go on, my brother, fearing nothing. We will do our work in defiance of all forms of evil. I have conquered many, and shall overcome all in the name of the God of my people. I shall bless the day when I can take your hand, and behold the face of the man who bears the scars of many battles. Go on—fight on—the army of Truth is with you. With tender blessing, I remain your brother, ever and ever.

J. F. S.”

From Mrs. Nettie C. Maynard. ♡

“ DR. BRITTAN’S beautiful letter in the last *Banner* should be read daily by certain ignorant, would-be critics, were we not expressly forbidden to ‘ cast our pearls before swine.’ Fearlessly do your grand work. O Worker ! The world has need of every stroke from your inspired pen. *Here* I know you have one true, sympathetic brother, who feels an anxiety for your success, and will help hold up your hands while you fight the battles of our Spiritual Zion.”

A STRONG WITNESS.

An intelligent gentleman whose residence is near Boston—a man of classical education, a lawyer, and an earnest reformer, who, at the beginning, took little or no interest in the Secular Press Bureau—writes, under a recent date, in a manner which indicates the greatest interest in the work. We make the following extracts from this gentleman's correspondence :

“ Yes ! The popular press publication of the truths and evidences of Modern Spiritualism is a good movement. At its start I was a little shy of it, not seeing clearly the purpose, nor comprehending the efficiency and value of it. But its now nearly two years' trial demonstrates its practicability and exceeding usefulness in diffusing spiritual light and knowledge amid the theologic works of Orthodoxy.

“ Professor Brittan, in the management of the enterprise, is the right man in the right place. He is familiar with the history and philosophy of Spiritualism ; he has been a minister, and knows the ignorance and prejudice which environ the clerical mind. He himself has arisen above the unreasonable folly and darkness into light and liberty, and can therefore assist, and does assist, both shepherds and their flocks who are yet floundering in the spiritual marshes and lowlands. Capital ! Excellent ! Good ! *Superlatively good !* is the review of Dr. Hawley, in a late issue of the *Banner of Light*. Both in its matter (*i. e.*, powder and shot), its exact aim, and its complete and artistic demolition of the bull's-eye, it is all that could be asked for or desired. Chevaliers may boast of the recent victories of American racers in England and France. But I rejoice in the coming dominion of Christ over Satan ; and as a foregleam of that good time coming I hail with loving sympathy and thanks Dr. Brittan's elegant and masterly exposition and refutation of the errors of the doctors of the church.

“ Glad ! very glad am I that his pen is not idle, inasmuch as it accomplishes such magnificent achievements in behalf of Truth in Modern Spiritualism as the American Secular Press from time to time gives to the reading public.

“ That his days may be long in the land and his efforts for the diffusion of spiritual light and liberty to the masses be followed by abundant success, is the earnest wish of
 Yours gratefully, A. E. G.”

Letter from General Edwards.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

It is highly gratifying to the friends of our cause to observe the favorable manner in which the "Editor-at-Large" project of the *Banner of Light* is received everywhere. The name of the veteran editor himself is as familiar as a household word in every spiritual family throughout the land. The movement was doubtless inaugurated in the higher life. We, therefore, look forward with pleasing anticipations to the grand results in the enterprise. * *

I have never known such an interest before in this city to learn the heaven-born truths of Spiritualism as now. When the wind blows, and the floods sweep away the sands and froths that float down the tide of time, the impregnable old *Banner* will stand in the hearts and memories of its thousands of readers.

Yours for the light,

J. EDWARDS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 31st, 1880.

SYMPATHY FROM THE GRANITE STATE.

The Secular Press Bureau correspondence has greatly enlarged the author's circle of friends, and thus widened the sphere of his usefulness. Among the people who have recently become interested in his work is a lady of foreign birth, of rare intelligence and culture, who writes from New Hampshire to the Editor-at-Large to communicate portions of a deeply interesting spiritual experience. In one of her letters she gives a brief history of her family, and expresses a strong interest in Dr. Brittan's present work, as will appear from the following extract :

"Prof. Brittan—I am not an American, but a subject of her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria—a good woman, a model mother, and also, I am told, a *Spiritualist*. My father came from Berwick on the Tweed, and my mother was a descendant of a famous Scotch ancestry, Angus MacDonald, Lord of the Isles—Highlanders. You know their character and history—stern and true to the death. My ancestors fought at Bannockburn. When a school girl I visited Sterling Castle, and looked on that famous and historic field, but I did not then love and reverence as I now do my noble Scotch ancestry.

“But I would be most unwilling to add to the pressure of duties now demanding your whole time, by trespassing for even a single half hour. Let me close this letter by wishing most sincerely that the success of your mission will be beyond your present anticipations; that the angels will touch both brain and pen, with deeper and keener power from day to day; that the indeed ‘glad tidings’ may reach those now sitting in darkness and sorrow, and be welcomed by thousands as the light penetrates their spirits, and the blessings of countless hosts fall as refreshing dew on your own soul.”

TESTIMONY OF A CLERGYMAN.

A well-known clergyman residing in Hartford, Conn., who has recently embraced Spiritualism, writes an earnest letter to Dr. Brittan, involving a cordial indorsement of his argument in reply to the most scholarly assault that has recently been made upon Spiritualism. We extract the following passage from the reverend gentleman’s letter:

“Not till to-day have I seen your reply to Rev. Dr. Hawley, and I hasten to congratulate you on so forcible and useful an article. I say useful, because it seems to me to be extremely well fitted for a wide popular circulation. The common prejudice against Spiritualism as *essentially* irreligious, and the equally common notion that communion through its channels with our departed friends is sinful and prohibited by the Bible, have long seemed to me to stand foremost among the obstacles to the general reception among good people of the truth on the subject. Both these points, especially the latter, you have ably met.

“Dr. H.’s article I have not seen, and so I cannot express an opinion on the conclusiveness of yours as a reply on the whole. But I will presume it to be so satisfactory as to suggest, as among the good works our new ALLIANCE may be expected to do, the publication in tract form of both articles side by side. Each party might be given, if desirous of it, the privilege of a previous revision, so as to make the discussion as conclusive as possible.

“H.”

From the Principals of the Belvidere Seminary, Misses Belle and Lizzie Bush.

We have read with great pleasure Dr. Brittan’s article in the *Banner of*

Light. It is beautiful and Christlike in spirit, breathing the purest and truest charity, born of Love and Wisdom. God bless him for writing such high thoughts, for, like the breath of heaven, they sweeten and refine the moral atmosphere of a cold and sordid world."

A VOICE FROM OVER THE SEA.

4 ESLINGTON TERRACE, *Newcastle-on-Tyne*, }
England, July 2d, 1881. }

Messrs. Colby and Rich :

Having read in the issue of the *Banner of Light* of June 18th Professor Brittan's masterly reply to Dr. Hawley, and which has called forth my highest encomiums, I write to ask you for your permission to republish it in this country in pamphlet form, as I believe it is calculated to do a vast amount of good if well circulated by Spiritualists amongst our opponents. *It is a most crushing reply, and completely turns the tables upon them.* It is not only just and fair, but appeals to our higher nature by its earnestness and eloquence. If he can write like that he is indeed the right man in the right place, in spite of what carping critics may say, and must become a power in our movement in bringing its claims to the attention of the religious world.

I care not to make a profit by publishing it, but rather seek to aid in spreading the good cause. I shall be glad to know your definite reply as early as possible, as there is to be a Church of England Congress to be held in this town in August next, and one of the subjects for their discussion is the relation of Spiritualism to the Church. I would like to have it out beforehand, and supply the clergy with our friend's cogent reasonings. If necessary to obtain Dr. Brittan's sanction to this scheme, shall be greatly obliged if you would kindly obtain it for me, as I do not like to go contrary to his wishes. . . . Yours truly, H. A. K.

A prominent Spiritualist in London writes us as follows under a recent date: "The Editor-at-Large project is a most praiseworthy effort to place one of the brightest lights in connection with American Spiritualism before the people, and in a way that will enable them to know him better. Prof. S. B. Brittan is the *one* man capable of filling such an important position."
 —*Banner of Light.*

In a very interesting letter, which may be found elsewhere, from the

pen of Edwin D. Babbitt, D. M., of New York City, he calls timely attention to the importance of the Editor-at-Large department, saying that it should certainly be sustained if we have any public-spiritedness about us; and adds: "Shall we helplessly let the periodical press slander us, and pervert what is most dear to us, when we can have an accomplished writer like Prof. Brittan to hurl back their assaults and enlighten their readers with reference to something higher and better than they yet conceive of? It is plausible to say that all Spiritualists should undertake this work, and that without pay; but this is not practicable, for people must earn a livelihood, and the cares of daily life absorb the time so that if those should be found who are as able as Prof. Brittan, they find it difficult to give time and attention to the matter."—*Banner of Light*.

THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE.

Let me congratulate our friend and brother, Prof. Brittan, upon the able and successful completion of his first year of missionary work in this new field, and to express the hope that the seed thus sown may bring forth an hundred fold in the near future; and as one of the earnest, practical laymen in the spiritual vineyard, let me urge upon the thousands of Spiritualists all over the land, who have not as yet contributed, and who have found joy and peace in believing, to send according to the blessings they have received, a small contribution to this work, for it is through the secular press largely that we are to reach the great struggling heart of humanity. I send my \$5 for the work. I would it were an hundred times more. May this appeal reach a thousand hearts, and bring forth a thousand responses. This work of Bro. Brittan's must be strengthened, and placed upon a firm basis. Friends, act, and act now. S. B. NICHOLS.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., *Jan.*, 1881.

Cor. of DR. J. M. PEEBLES, *from The Banner of Light, Dec. 6, 1879.*

MR. BRITTAN AS EDITOR-AT-LARGE.—Sincerely do I hope that wealthy Spiritualists will respond quickly and liberally to the "Editor-at-Large fund." Dr. Brittan is "worthy and well qualified"—to use a Masonic term—to fill this station. He is thoughtful, scholarly, and wields a Damascus blade. Come to the rescue. There are several rich Spiritualists right in New York City, that would find sweet peace to their souls by handing over to him a thousand dollars each. I pray God and the good

angels to impress them to so do. Such men as Dr. Brittan, Dr. Buchanan, and other royal-souled reformers who have devoted their lives to the mental, moral, and spiritual development of humanity, should not be permitted the least annoyance from financial depression.

A learned Professor in a foreign University, Master of Arts and Member of the Royal Society of Literature, in a private letter, recently received, thus refers to Dr. S. B. Brittan :

“I have seen from time to time in the *Banner of Light* proposals for securing his services as Editor-at-Large. I earnestly hope that means will be found to this end. I know of nothing more calculated to serve the wide cause of Spiritualism than so enlisting his services. I read all that comes from his prolific pen with interest and profit.”

VOICES OF THE PEOPLE.

POPULAR ESTIMATE OF THE SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.

IN these days the people are so well informed that they cannot be deceived in respect to the general drift of thought and the progress of ideas. They readily interpret the spirit of the times, and are entitled to be heard on all questions of public interest. The use of the Secular Press for the universal diffusion of spiritual light and knowledge—now that the plan is fairly understood—is approved with great unanimity and enthusiasm. Many of the voices are especially significant, since they are known to come from personal sources of high character and liberal culture. We may not suppress, altogether, the emphatic testimony of these friends, since words of encouragement are incentives to further effort in the right direction.

We may not always accept the Latin proverb, “*Vox populi vox Dei;*” but we may rationally question the wisdom of suppressing

the spontaneous expression of the popular feeling and judgment concerning any of the important objects and interests of life, and the measures by which it may be proposed to carry the same forward to a beneficent consummation. In the letters relating to the Editor-at-Large, are many earnest words which are both encouraging and instructive. As these are disinterested testimonies—quite unlooked for and unsought—which may possibly cheer and strengthen others in their warfare against error and injustice, we do not feel at liberty to stifle these Voices. Whether they speak to encourage the desponding, to strengthen the weak, or to reprove the unworthy, let them be heard. The explanatory notes are chiefly by the Editor of the *Banner of Light*.

W. S. writes from New Orleans to assure us of his deep interest in the Editor-at-Large movement. From his earnest letter we extract the following :

“It does not seem possible that among the 3,000,000 Spiritualists in the United States, five hundred cannot be found who would willingly subscribe ten dollars each per annum for so meritorious an object. . . . I am afraid that the old adage, that ‘What’s everybody’s business is nobody’s business,’ holds good in this case. I think and feel that every society or association of Spiritualists throughout the whole land should each get up a subscription paper, and appoint a committee whose duty it should be to see each and every member and invite—nay, *urge*—them to subscribe according to their several means and ability ; not only to pay this year, but *every year* as long as they live, if they are able and the occasion exists. Better say that the sum of \$5,000 per annum is needed.”

A friend writes from Baltimore to a member of the Editor-at-Large Committee inclosing his subscription. The following passage from his letter is emphatic and rather instructive :

“I see that you are one of the committee on the Editor-at-Large enterprise. I inclose five dollars for that fund. I am induced to do this by reading the attacks which the other papers make upon the project. I see

so much 'dog in the manger' in the articles written against it, that I conclude it is my duty to help it; and I only regret that I cannot give more to sustain the man, gentleman and scholar. Brittan—in his efforts to defend our cause—there is no doubt wields his pen more potently than the whole host of scribblers, who write little else than ghost stories."

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

Your suggestion in several late issues of your paper concerning the employment of an Editor-at-Large, on the part of the Spiritualists of this country, ought, I think, to strike every true believer in our beautiful philosophy as just what is needed at this period; and if the friends of the cause will, so far as able, lend a helping hand, a generous salary can be raised, a splendid work begun, and an endless amount of good be accomplished.

A better man could not be found in all the ranks of Spiritualism for the work proposed than Prof. S. B. Brittan.

Should an arrangement of this kind be entered into, please put my name on the list of subscribers, for I do not believe I can appropriate ten dollars to a better cause.

Very respectfully,

MRS. SILVIA B. CABELL.

No. 22 Third street, N. E., Washington, D. C.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I have observed that the suggestion contained in my former letter published in the *Banner of Light* of Aug. 9th, has received attention from a number of your correspondents, and has been made the subject of highly appreciative editorial comments. The friends of the proposal, whose letters have appeared in your paper, all concur at once in their estimate of the importance of the measure, and the peculiar adaptation of DR. S. B. BRITTAN to the place and the duties required of the Editor-at-Large. His recent and vigorous handling of Prof. W. Wundt, of the Leipsic University, together with many other examples, illustrate the breadth of his views, the clearness of his statement, and the admirable method of his argument; the ease with which he parries each blow and disarms every assailant; and the *never-surrender* spirit of his long war for unpopular truth—all these services, and his constant labors for *thirty-three years*, assure us

of what he is still capable of doing in the rational defense of that noble cause which is the common interest and inheritance of us all.

But how shall we best promote that interest? No matter how complete and convincing these replies to the enemies of Spiritualism may be, they measurably fail of their object so long as their publication is confined to our spiritual papers, which are comparatively few in number, and restricted in circulation. They do not reach the larger audience, in whose minds the enemy is all the while industriously sowing his tares, and in whose presence our vindication should be calmly but boldly made. *Let the shot be sent straight into the enemy's camp.* The plan projected provides for this, inasmuch as it would be the special business of the Editor-at-Large to confront the enemies of the Liberal cause on any ground they may choose to occupy.

Yours for the truth, J. B. LOOMIS.

LABORS OF MR. S. B. BRITTAN.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I feel impressed to say a few words to you, not to advise, but simply to make a practical suggestion relative to the important labor he has undertaken. When I call his labor *important* I desire to be understood as meaning all the language can imply ; for I deem that the work he is to do will, or *may*, result in extending a correct knowledge of our soul-cheering faith into circles now darkened by the smoky fogs of theology, to a much greater extent than the labors of any other one man—ay, or of any half-dozen men. His work is to meet our foes on their own ground ; to go *behind their entrenchments*—so to speak—and deal with them at hand-to-hand encounters.

But to the suggestion I hinted at. It is this : That nothing of Mr. Brittan's labors be lost, after it may have done its immediate work of redemption from error ; but that every blow he strikes—and he will strike some *incisive ones*—be made a record of ; that every untruth which he has caught in its stealthy travels, and strangled ; every misrepresentation he has shown to be such ; in short, all his work, every step he takes in the direction of demolishing error and upbuilding truth, be made a record of, and all gathered and published in book form at the close of his first campaign, or as soon thereafter as may be. Such a compilation of proofs and arguments would make one of the best books to be found among spiritual literature.

Northfield, Vt.

D. T. AVERILL.

A VOICE FROM THE SOUTH.

A lady, writing from Fernandina, Fla., whose subscription to the Bureau Fund was recently credited, has an enlightened appreciation of the work, as will appear from the following extract from her letter under date of June 20th :

“ A thousand thanks for Prof. S. B. Brittan’s noble defense of Spiritualism in his reply to Rev. Dr. Hawley, which I have just perused in the *Banner of Light*. I have never read anything I liked better, or that did me more good ; not even his discussion with Dr. Hanson, of Hartford, which I read many years ago and enjoyed very much. I thought it the best possible thing. I have since tried to obtain a copy, but have never been able. I hope the present correspondence will be published in book form and widely circulated.

“ Again thanking him with all my heart, and wishing God and the good spirits to bless him forever, I remain a sincere friend. A. C. F.”

 ANOTHER DISINTERESTED WITNESS.

The author of the following letter is well known among the independent people who have broken away from the creeds that bound them, and now exercise the right to think for themselves. He is an accepted and fearless representative of the laboring classes, among whom his opinions have weight. His added testimony to the importance of the work assigned to the Editor-at-Large, and the peculiar fitness of Mr. Brittan for the place, is direct and unqualified by any private aim or personal ambition :

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I see by the papers and circulars that you have established an Editor-at-Large, whose business it is to eliminate from the great volume of spirit phenomena the true and reliable philosophy of human possibilities, and that you have selected for that most responsible duty Dr. Samuel B. Brittan, than whom I know of none so capable, with a mind so clear, analytical, philosophical, and qualified by nature as well as by many years of earnest observation and investigation, for this high position.

The bushel of chaff has followed the grain of wheat in the whirling

course of this great spiritual truth, blinding and obfuscating the superficial observer, filling the moral atmosphere with a denser darkness than arose from the old creeds and faiths. It is Dr. Brittan's business to distinguish the chaff from the wheat, and to burn up with the unquenchable fire of truth and sciento-philosophic demonstrations those shells and fungi that accompany all great evolutions. Therefore I predict a new era for Spiritualism, which shall establish itself among the late discoveries in the invisible forces of Nature.

I thank you for this correct step. Go on! Let the light shine.

G. W. MADOX.

NEW YORK, *Feb. 2d*, 1880.

C. W. Kellogg writes us from Brooklyn in indorsement of the Editor-at-Large project. In the course of his letter (which unites business with words of cheer) he hopes that such Spiritualists as are blessed with the means will come forward and insure the success of the enterprise. "I cannot say 'Give me neither poverty nor riches.' I would that I were able of myself to so firmly seat Prof. Brittan in the position of Editor-at-Large that poverty could never displace him. He of all men, to my mind, is best suited by intellect, education, temperament, and experience to advocate and defend successfully the cause in the secular prints."

A prominent Spiritualist in Rochester, N. Y., writes :

"The dignity and ability with which the *Banner of Light* is conducted meet the hearty approbation of the Spiritualists of this city. It pursues the even tenor of its way without displaying personal animosities or mixing in factional controversies. I rejoice that there is such a spiritual paper. I have read the *Banner* from its first issue, and a hundred times have had occasion to speak of the wisdom of its course. We approve the 'Editor-at-Large' arrangement, and are deeply mortified at the unjust attacks on Dr. Brittan and the *Banner*."

John L. Moore, writing from Artemisia, Canada, says :

"The Secular Press Bureau is doing a grand work. I recollect Prof. Brittan well, when in the early days of the cause he spoke from the platform, in that easy, fluent style that made it a pleasure to listen to him. Prof. Brittan, being well known as a magazine and newspaper writer, has

opportunities of reaching the press which no other writer in the Spiritualistic ranks has in the same degree."

M. Larkin, Downington, Pa., writes :

"In selecting S. B. Brittan for 'Editor-at-Large,' I cannot see how a wiser choice could have been made. I feel under lasting obligations to him and Charles Partridge for having given us, in the *Spiritual Telegraph*, the grandest truths ever made known to mortals. It was their paper that first drew my attention to Spiritualism—a subject I would not have remained ignorant of for all the wealth in our Keystone State."

B. F. Blackiston, of Dover, Del., informs us in the course of a recent business letter, that the communications by Prof. S. B. Brittan which we have from time to time copied from the secular journals, and which articles have aimed to reply to objections made against Spiritualism, its teachings and its media, have caused much interest in the subject in that place, and bid fair to produce correspondingly good results for the cause.

*Extract from Published Correspondence of EDWIN D. BABBITT, D.M.,
from "The Banner of Light," Dec. 27.*

The suggestion of such a man as Prof. S. B. Brittan for the position is one of the best ever made. . . . The type of his mind is both historical and philosophical, his style graceful, and his sarcasm against evil, when his righteous indignation is aroused, is very scathing. He has been in the midst of wars and controversies in this divine cause for so many years that it has made him quick to repel assaults from the enemy, and yet his kindness and balance of mind render him courteous and fair in his language. . . . Being one of our representative men, and fairly known even in the secular world for his literary ability, he would be able to gain admittance to many papers which would otherwise be closed against him. Men of financial power, men of grand souls, will you let the opportunity pass? Then will Heaven let the opportunity of blessing your own souls and the souls of others pass away also.

A lady of profound religious convictions, of rare intelligence, and a most efficient member of the Episcopal Church, who resides

in Newark, N. J., sends ten dollars to the Editor-at-Large. We extract the following from her excellent letter :

“I am very much interested that all mankind may become more fully acquainted with our Father in heaven. If this is one of the means that he would use to bring them in closer communion with himself—by bringing the spiritual world nearer to us—and he would use *you* as a medium in calling the attention of many to this mode of manifesting himself, I shall be glad that I have added my mite.”

“STRIKE, BUT HEAR !”

The editor of the *Banner of Light* says, “Prof. Wundt is ‘unhorsed’ by Prof. Brittan.” The man with “the sword of the spirit” not only seems to have broken the lance of the scientific assailant, but to have unsettled the very ground beneath his feet. Wundt being *hors de combat*, we predict that, in his next tilt at the truth, he *won’t* ride so boldly to the front without first measuring the defensive arm that strikes for Spiritualism.—*Exchange*.

THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE PROPOSITION.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

The suggestion that a spiritual “Editor-at-Large” be engaged to do certain needed labor among the secular papers, I heartily approve. Dr. S. B. Brittan possesses the requisite literary ability and scientific knowledge to fill the responsible position, and has had great experience in all the phases of the spiritual phenomena. If Dr. Brittan is engaged as such editor, as soon as I am notified I will forward five dollars to aid the undertaking, which I regard of much importance.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM LUTHER.

19 *Alexander st., Rochester, N. Y., Oct. 6, 1879.*

OAKFIELD, WIS.—Isaac Orvis writes : “I have been much pleased in perusing Dr. S. B. Brittan’s criticism on Prof. Wundt’s letter to Prof. Ulrici, in a recent *Banner*. Is it not strange that scientists should claim for Spiritualism what the most unscientific Spiritualist never claimed for it, namely, the abrogation of natural law in the movement of ponderable bodies by spirit-force? This manifestation is perfectly in accordance with

the law of gravity, but superior to it for the time being ; otherwise Prof. Wundt could never have lifted one of the smallest specimens in his cabinet. Go on, Bro. Brittan—pull up the stakes, tear down the landmarks of false philosophy, bigotry and superstition, and let the world have the truth in a clearer light.”

NEW YORK, March 26th, 1881.

MESSRS. COLBY & RICH :

Enclosed find my check, which you will please apply to the Editor-at-Large Fund. Prof. S. B. Brittan is an able champion of Spiritualism. Let me herein say, that, to my mind, this is the most complete and fertile method of cultivating the growth of this magnificent truth. It reaches millions of minds. I deem it one of the broadest and grandest movements since the birth of Spiritualism.

Respectfully,

J. A. CAZINO.

CHRISTIAN, TEXAS.—Mrs. S. Crawford sends \$5 for the Editor-at-Large Fund (which sum has been previously acknowledged), and says : “ Being a practical Spiritualist and subscriber to your excellent paper, I desire to present my small mite in aid of the interests of truth. I think Bro. S. B. Brittan is a great and noble champion in the cause of progress and eternal justice.”

“ T. K. Austin,” of New York City, writes us on the subject of the Editor-at-Large movement under a recent date and in the following forcible manner :

“ The proposition to institute a commission as ‘ Editor-at-Large ’—as announced in the *Banner of Light*—strikes me as a matter of serious importance and of timely consideration, and it engages my most cordial sympathy and approval ; especially in view of the exalted character of the proposed incumbent of that office, Prof. S. B. Brittan.

“ It has been my highly valued privilege to enjoy a close acquaintance with Dr. Brittan, consequently some opportunity has been afforded me for an opinion in the matter. And it occurs as one of the very few occasions of my life when I would willingly divest myself of a natural diffidence and disrelish for publicity, could I thereby obtain a sufficiently potent influence to induce my brother Spiritualists to seize the opportunity with avidity while yet it is theirs to grasp.

“ Who will take up the gauntlet of the opposition? To whom shall we look for a refutation of the charges against Spiritualism? It seems to this writer that if any one can ‘ fill the bill,’ the author of ‘ Man and His Relations’ is that one. His unswerving fidelity to principle, his rich endowment, with superior natural abilities, his ripe scholarship, the ‘*suaviter in modo et fortiter in re*’ which governs him throughout, both mentally and morally—all these, combined with a natural dignity and refinement of the best type, and developed by lifelong culture, constitute a character rare if not unique, and especially fitted to the delicate, discriminating, yet unflinching duty involved in the office of Editor-at-Large as I understand it.”

We are in receipt of the following letter from a lady who does not profess to believe in Spiritualism, and whose communication is another incidental evidence that Prof. Brittan’s reputation as a writer is not confined to the spiritual public :

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

I am not a Spiritualist, for, while I do not doubt that the phenomena occur, I am not yet satisfied of their spiritual origin ; but I will gladly contribute ten dollars towards carrying out your suggestion in regard to Dr. S. B. Brittan of this city. He is, perhaps, the best fitted for such a position of any man in the country. Hoping you may succeed in effecting an arrangement with him very soon, and that the necessary amount of money may be raised before the new year begins, I am,

Very respectfully,

MRS. E. BRUCE.

New York, Oct. 12th, 1879.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light :

Inclosed please find the “ widow’s mite ” again for the Brittan Fund. It is most strange that every reader of the *Banner of Light* cannot plainly see that the Editor-at-Large movement is the grandest plan ever adopted for the defense of our cause ; for by it the skeptical world will soon see and know the true soul and body of much-abused Spiritualism. Ever the trouble has been to get the facts before the people in the papers in which the abuse has appeared, and in a manner to insure that they will be read ; and to my mind Dr. S. B. Brittan has proved himself to be just the man to command respect from the press and the people, and thus compass the ends sought. His sound logic, high culture, and his wise balance of

temper, force me to believe, almost, that he was "raised up" for this very purpose.

H. HAYES.

Muir, Mich.

THE CRUSADE AGAINST ISRAEL.

Dr. S. B. Brittan's vindication of the Jews has been published in pamphlet form at the request of many persons, as will be perceived by reference to our advertising columns. In his defense of this people he has administered a severe but wholesome reproof to certain Christians who need reformation. Indeed, for forty years no form of political iniquity, religious ostracism, or social injustice among men has escaped his searching observation. Nor have the enemies of freedom and the equal rights of all men found shield or shelter from deserved chastisement at his hands. If he is fearless and unsparing in his handling of the enemies of truth and justice, his severity in controversy never degenerates into harshness. Personal resentment and acrimonious feeling seldom or never obscure the principles for which he contends. While smarting under the lash of his criticism, not a few have been made to feel the justice of their punishment.

A gentleman at Muir, Ionia County, Mich., in a letter received some days since, in referring to our special correspondent says:

"I have perused many articles from S. B. Brittan, my stranger friend and brother, but none with so much interest and pleasure as the 'Plea for the Jews' in a late number of the *Banner of Light*. . . . I am only a citizen, loving all the freedom and justice the Lord—the true God—has granted us.

"Church regalia admitted free of duty is a new revelation to me, and is another proof that our government is not secular. He has done up the clergy without gloves, and we want some similar pen to write things three hundred and sixty-five days in each year. . . . I shall long remember the noble reformer who lives for the right under all circumstances. Heaven and the good angels guide him that he may not spare those who, for opinion's sake, would burn us all if they could. I hope he may yet be installed 'Editor-at-Large.'"—*Banner of Light*.

VIEWS OF THE PRESS.

DR. BRITTAN AND THE "TIMES."

ON our fifth page will be found a masterly argument and a trenchant and searching analysis—both bearing on the ignorant criticisms of the editor of the New York *Times* as leveled at Spiritualism and its work in our day and generation. The Editor-at-Large speaks both from the head and the heart in this reply, and we are sure our readers will agree with us that the tone of each is sound, trustworthy, and calculated to be of "good cheer" to every friend of the Modern Dispensation. The editor of the *Hartford* (Ct.) *Daily Times*—to the columns of which paper [for Sept. 8th] we are indebted for this able rejoinder on the part of Dr. B.—thus calls the attention of his readers to the matter in hand :

"Dr. Brittan's reply to the editorial position of the New York *Times*, concerning Dr. Beard and his assumptions in relation to clairvoyance, as a proved reality, will be found to be as keen and effective as it is logical and courteous. The *Times*, not liking the attitude in which it found itself left by Dr. Brittan, refused to publish his reply."—*Banner of Light*.

From the Banner of Light of Aug. 23 and Sept. 13, 1849.

We have hinted at the importance of the Spiritualists of the United States employing Professor S. B. Brittan, of New York, as an "Editor-at-Large," to write for the secular press in defense of Spiritualism. Professor Brittan possesses the requisite capacity for such an undertaking in a degree superior to any other individual in our ranks, and could do much and valuable work for the cause by meeting the frequent assaults of our enemies on their own ground, and also through their channels of communication. There is no reason why the Spiritualists should not employ an agent to perform such services just as any theological body may engage a missionary to look after *its* interests among the people. A strong man is needed to

smite with his truth-revealing pen, and on their own ground, those journalistic Philistines, and either show up the fallacies indulged in by these papers or their representatives, and in the *very columns* in which such fallacies appear—or, failing of getting a hearing for his articles forwarded *freely* in reply, to at least demonstrate to lovers of fair play everywhere the want of a proper sentiment of common justice in the sanctums of the daily or weekly issues refusing to print his communications.

Why should *not* the Spiritualists of the United States perceive the truth of what we affirm? and, perceiving, why should they not further employ at least one man at a living salary to watch the daily and weekly secular papers, detect such “snap-judgment” articles as may from time to time appear, and reply to them in a manner that shall defend the honor of the cause before the world? We have in the main asked this question in several previous issues, and have given publicity to divers letters from correspondents bearing on the project, and all agreeing that the nomination of Professor S. B. Brittan of New York, to fill the post of Spiritualist Editor-at-Large, was the best that could be made; and we at present desire to emphasize all we have before said regarding the practicability of the creation of the office, and the peculiar fitness of Professor Brittan to fill it after it has been so created. It is our opinion that he could do most effective work in advocating the claims of the Spiritual Dispensation, and could ere long—when the truly classical character of his writings came to be understood—either command equal space in the secular papers as that accorded to the enemies of Spiritualism, or could at least close these popular channels of communication against those who now so fearlessly (because they do not expect to be criticised) misrepresent the facts of Spiritualism, disfigure its revealments, and belie its defenders.

SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.

From the Two Worlds.

“It is, doubtless, largely owing to the labors of Dr. Brittan in this capacity, for which he possesses distinguished qualifications, that the tone of the press in general has greatly altered of late toward Spiritualism; and we venture to opine that our dignified neighbor, the *New York Times*, will not be in haste to make another exhibit of its conspicuous want of information and of correct thinking on the topics it has so confidently essayed to discuss.

“In this connection it is not out of place to invite the attention of our readers to that department of effort in behalf of spiritual enlightenment, over which our able and scholarly co-laborer, DR. BRITTAN, presides.

And we do this simply from a sense of duty, and without the slightest hint from him that such a service on our part would be agreeable. We have no question that the field of labor in which he is engaged was marked out for him by higher intelligences, nor that he is most worthily and efficiently performing the work to which he has been assigned. It seems but right, then, that those who are interested in the advancement of the truth, and have been gifted with the capacity for accumulating means, should contribute the funds necessary to enable him to devote his best energies to the work.

“ We have reason to believe that his needs for this work thus far have not been over-well supplied, and we gladly accede to the suggestion of a valued correspondent, in offering to receive and faithfully transmit any contributions for the Secular Press Bureau that may be entrusted to our care.”

THE AMERICAN EDITOR-AT-LARGE, Prof. Brittan, one of the ablest and most experienced writers on Spiritualism, is wisely retained by the Spiritualists of America, to write attractive and instructive articles on Spiritualism in the leading newspapers of the country. By this means excellent articles on our cause are perused by thousands of intelligent readers, who would otherwise remain in ignorance of teachings thus given. —*Medium and Daybreak*, London, Eng.

Our esteemed contemporary, the *Harbinger of Light*, published in far-off Melbourne, Australia, has expressed the whole sum and substance of the plan of the Secular Press Bureau in the following paragraph, which we recommend to the attention of all our readers :

“ We are glad to observe from the *Banner of Light* that the ‘ Editor-at-Large ’ project is succeeding, and that Prof. S. B. Brittan has entered upon his duties in this direction. The principal duty of this official is to reply to letters and articles against Spiritualism which appear in the secular papers, and to contribute, to such papers as will publish them, articles on Spiritualism. A better man for this duty than the veteran Spiritualist and journalist referred to could scarcely be found.”

OPENING THE GATES.

The Gate City, a live daily paper published at Keokuk, Iowa, recently contained an article against Mr. Kiddle in his relations to Spiritualism, in

which this new and worthy disciple was severely assailed. The same paper, in its issue of the 28th ultimo, contains a polite but analytical and searching review of the same by Prof. Brittan, accompanied by an apologetic statement in which the editor of that paper explains the grounds on which he based his former strictures, and from which we extract the following :

“We publish a bright and spirited letter from Dr. Brittan of New York, in reply to a paragraph of ours about Mr. Henry Kiddle. We have neither space nor disposition to discuss Spiritualism.” . . .

The review by the Editor-at-Large, entitled “Spiritualism and its Critics,” follows the editor’s introduction of his new correspondent, in the first editorial column, in large type, and led. It gives us pleasure to record the fact as a credit to *The Gate City*, whose editor thus opens another gate to admit Mr. Brittan and Spiritualism into the wide field of journalism.—*Banner of Light*.

POPULAR OPINION.

A Connecticut correspondent, who has been a constant patron of the *Popular Science Monthly* since the date of its first issue, writes thus respecting that journal, and of Dr. Brittan’s review of Professor Wundt’s letter to Ulrici which appeared in our issue of Oct. 4th :

“I have just finished the perusal of Dr. Brittan’s review of Professor Wundt’s assailment of Spiritualism, and congratulate him on the possession of unimpaired faculties and a very fortunate refutation of the points considered *strong* by the Leipsic Professor. It seems to me very strange that the *Popular Science Monthly* takes the position it has all along against Spiritualism, when, by its very name and the assertion of its purposes, it should be thorough in its investigation of all facts relating to the subject. I have taken that magazine ever since its first publication, and should vote for a new editor, had I the chance—one who would be impartial and not prejudge cases before they are tried, as Youmans and his clique have done.”

The reader will have noticed that Prof. Youmans often copies a large part of the contents of his *Monthly* from the foreign scientific journals, and not always with the discrimination which indicates

that the Editor is abreast with the leading men of the times. He has copied Prof. Wundt's letter against Spiritualism with every indication of cordial approval. Now, why should he not also copy Dr. Brittan's reply, that his readers may have both sides of the question as presented by two scientific philosophers? To assume that Brittan's answer is not equally worthy of public attention is a hollow assumption which will not be accepted by any one competent to form an intelligent opinion. So long as the spiritual side of the question is fairly represented by a man whose metaphysical research and ability appear to be as broad and comprehensive as the philosophy of the average University professor, the assumption that all the science is opposed to Spiritualism is irreconcilable with reason and the facts. In the name of science the public demand that the journal, ostensibly established in its interest, shall give both sides a candid hearing. If such an exhibition of fidelity to truth and justice is too much for the public to expect, the Editor should at least have the manliness to shut out all further *ex parte* disquisitions on a subject which he has only meddled with to obscure. If unwilling to either hear both sides or exclude both, the alternative remains of continuing his own beggarly course, which will neither increase his circulation nor improve a doubtful reputation for intelligence and fair dealing.—*Banner of Light*.

THE ANSWER TO ANDOVER.

On our first page will be found S. B. Brittan's admirable reply to the animadversions urged by Prof. Austin Phelps, D.D., against the philosophy and phenomena of Spiritualism.

The editor of the *Merrimac Valley Visitor* has indeed set an example of manly fairness and unimpeachable justice which strongly illustrates the improved tone of the Press, and is worthy of all imitation. Regarding Spiritualism as a subject of such importance as

to merit a candid and fearless consideration of its claims, he presents to his readers one of the most elaborate papers from the pen of the Editor-at-Large, filling nearly eight columns in that journal. Nor does he hesitate to express his estimate of its quality. The answer to Prof. Austin Phelps, D.D., of the Andover Theological Seminary, and indirectly to the Orthodox clergy of New England, is one that may furnish them much food for reflection. Andover's assault upon Spiritualism was published in the *Congregationalist*. The editor of the *Visitor* informs his readers of this fact, and in further reference to the subject he says :

“An answer to Prof. Phelps was first sent to that paper (*Congregationalist*), but as religious papers have less liberality and a lower standard of justice than the secular press, it was rejected. . . . We give place to the reply to the Andover Professor. . . . All interested in Spiritualism will be pleased with this paper. . . . It deals with the subject with a strong and fearless hand. . . . It is written by a learned gentleman who has given years to the study of Spiritual Philosophy, and is known by his writings and addresses upon that subject in every State of this Union, if not in every civilized nation on the globe. . . . We know it will interest thousands of people in this country who are not habitual readers of the *Visitor*.”

The attention of those who have accustomed themselves to think that Dr. Brittan's labors as Editor-at-Large are not productive of adequate results, is respectively called to the conclusiveness of this reply, and the signal advantage gained for the cause by its publication in a paper printed in the immediate vicinity of Professor Phelps' field of labor.—*Banner of Light*.

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM.

“‘The agitation of thought’ which ‘is the beginning of wisdom,’ reached Saratoga early in the present year. A great wave from the ‘river of life’ appears to have passed over the town, and the good people have become deeply interested in Spiritualism. The

subject had been discussed for some time in the local papers, and Rev. Bostwick Hawley, D.D., had represented the enemies of Spiritualism in a lengthy and elaborate paper which appeared in the *Saratoga Eagle*. The doctor's display of classical and theological learning was truly remarkable, and apparently intended to stupefy and silence the Spiritualists; but it had no such effect. On the contrary, it was but a bugle-blast which summoned the champion of the Secular Press Bureau to the field and the battle. Our readers will perceive, by reference to our first page, how thoroughly in earnest was the champion of Spiritualism, and how effectually he overthrew the churchial Goliath.

"Truly the messenger from the spirit-world stepped in when the tide of public interest was rising; the waters were deeply moved by his presence; a new fountain was opened—the 'well of water springing up into everlasting life.' The people are bound to patronize 'the new spring.' Already the spiritually lame give promise of going alone at an early day, the mourners rejoice, and the blind begin to see. Honor to the 'Editor-at-Large' for his good work in this regard, and honor also to the editor of the *Saratoga Eagle*, who displays his manly independence, even-handed justice and also his eminent good sense in the following editorial announcement:

"'PROF. BRITTAN'S DEFENSE OF SPIRITUALISM.—It gives us unfeigned pleasure to announce that we shall be able to present to our readers next week an extended and elaborate reply to Dr. Bostwick Hawley's able article in the *Eagle* of Jan. 8th, entitled, "Oscillations of Human Opinion." Perhaps few, if any, orthodox thinkers, and certainly none in this locality, have more learnedly and logically assaulted the doctrines of modern Spiritualism than Dr. Hawley. By the cumulative evidence of sacred and profane history, together with painstaking ratiocination, Dr. Hawley has sought to prove that professed mediums are either dupes or deceivers; that Spiritualism, so called, is full of sophistry; that its teachings are mischievous in the extreme, and that the phenomena upon which

it is based are accountable upon other theories than that of communication with disembodied spirits.

“ ‘ The response is from the gifted pen of Prof. S. B. Brittan, of New York, who is reputed to be one of the very ablest exponents of the spiritualistic philosophy in the United States. We understand that the answer to Dr. Hawley’s paper is designed to be masterly, exhaustive and conclusive, and that the several objections to Spiritualism raised by our local contributor will be fairly, fully and squarely met. But this point must be decided by the reader rather than by the claims of the author or his friends. At any rate, the arguments of gentlemen of the caliber and character of Dr. Hawley and Prof. Brittan relative to this phase of belief will dignify a discussion which just now enjoys large local prominence, both in the village papers and among our people.’ ”

“ In the issue containing Dr. Brittan’s article, the Editor of the *Eagle* gives further expression to his views in the following paragraph :

“ ‘ The contribution on the subject of Spiritualism, from the pen of Prof. S. B. Brittan, occupies a large space in this issue ; but the ability, vigor and interest of the production justify the prominence we have accorded it. Whether Spiritualism is a true or a false philosophy, or a mixture of truth and error, a perusal of this paper cannot but give a more enlightened conception of its scope, character and pretensions. Although occupying antagonistic positions, Prof. Brittan and Dr. Hawley both seek to fortify their arguments by liberal quotations from the Bible. Without undertaking to review this lengthy and labored article, we commend it, as we did Dr. Hawley’s paper, to the painstaking perusal and thoughtful deliberation of every intelligent reader.’ ”

Dr. Brittan *is doing valuable work which is not sufficiently appreciated* in the Secular Press Bureau. It is no small benefit to have at hand a man of his caliber, versatile power and varied information, whose pen is devoted to exposing mistakes and answering objections in the secular press. A letter of his on Dr. Beard as a “ Psychological Expert,” addressed to the *New York Times*, is excellent ; and it is but a sample of many that find their way into the public press.—*Psychological Review* (London, Eng.) for *November, 1881.*

THE DELAWARE VALLEY ADVANCE.

The editor of the *Delaware Valley* (Pa.) *Advance*, thought *he* saw a chance, too, to join the "Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart" combination ; but he has, it seems, been led, after the first dash, to retire most confusedly to cover—the cause of his precipitate retreat being an unexpected forward movement on the part of Prof. S. B. Brittan. Prof. B., having received information from parties resident in the vicinity, at once replied to the *Advance* manager, and not only gained admission to the columns of that paper, but also called out an editorial from that individual, wherein he stated that he had "no criticisms to make," and did not want "a controversy" with Dr. Brittan ; he nevertheless tried to send his readers off on a false scent by saying that the Professor had "advanced no arguments in support of the *doctrine* of the people he defends," when he (the editor) knew very well that the object of the latter was not to discuss the doctrines of Spiritualism, but to meet his charges, and to rebuke the bigoted spirit of their author. Desirous of covering his ignominious retreat, the *Advance* editor, like the ostrich when pursued, forced his little head into the sand, leaving his more ponderous body in plain view. His appeal to the community, to devise means to limit the rights of Spiritualists, was atrocious, and deserved the earnest protest and unqualified condemnation to which Professor Brittan has given expression.

Banner of Light.

THE CHANGED TONE.

Some months since, Rev. Prof. Austin Phelps, D.D., contributed an article to the *Congregationalist*, in which he characterized Spiritualism as "*a putrescent heap.*" In his treatment of its principles and claims he made no effort to disguise his supreme contempt of the whole subject, and generally of its disciples. That article was reviewed at length by the Editor-at-Large in his *Secular Press Correspondence*. The reply was a searching analysis

and complete refutation of the Andover Professor's dogmatic assumptions ; at the same time it was a timely and salutary caution to all similar offenders against the dignity of truth and the proprieties of religious controversy. How far Dr. Brittan's polite but scathing review may have been influential in modifying the offensive tone of the " Sacred Rhetoric " illustrated at Andover, we may not absolutely determine ; but some power has accomplished a most decided reformation or change of opinion in Rev. Dr. Phelps' mind as to the importance of questions involved in the subject, as was to be seen in the article we republished from a more recent number of the *Congregationalist* a short time since, and which is alluded to as follows in the *New York Tribune* of the 24th ultimo :

"The Rev. Dr. Austin Phelps, professor emeritus of Sacred Rhetoric at Andover Theological Seminary, believes that the pulpit ought not to ignore Spiritualism. In an article in the *Congregationalist* he says : 'When people find their inherited faith in miracles and in inspiration muddled by the modern necromantic marvels, it is natural, it is reasonable that they should ask : "What do these things mean ?" And so long as popular science says never a word, who shall give to the people the necessary satisfaction, if the pulpit does not? Has not this thing been let alone long enough? Is it not time that the clergy should have opinions about it which, as theologians, they are willing to be responsible for, and opinions which shall commend themselves to the good sense and the biblical faith of their hearers? It can never be beneath the dignity of the pulpit to answer any inquiries, touching religious faith, which an honest and sensible people are moved to ask.'"

It is with evident satisfaction that we record the important fact that Professor Phelps has at last reached the rational conclusion that the clergy have "long enough" neglected their obvious duty in respect to Spiritualism. He reminds them in plain terms that they "should have opinions about it which, as theologians, they are willing to be responsible for." This is sensible, and substantially what the advocates of Spiritualism have been trying to impress upon them for the last thirty years. We are pleased to learn that

the dense fog which so long clouded the theological mind is being dissipated. Andover begins to see the subject in a better light. We hope the clergy generally will follow the example and advice of Professor Phelps; step down from the church steeple-chase stilts to the level of those "honest and sensible people" who demand light and are waiting to receive instruction.

Banner of Light.

THE SECULAR PRESS BUREAU.

THE reader will find a trenchant article from Prof. S. B. Brittan, in and with which he, as chairman of the new Bureau to be conducted under the auspices of the American Spiritualist Alliance, of New York City, for another year, moves to the front in excellent order, and with, we think, conclusive results.

It ought to give a thrill of pride to any one who loves the Spiritualist cause inherently, and for itself, to peruse such articles as this one by Prof. Brittan, and to feel that such talented men as himself and others are now united to continue the work of refuting the libelous attacks on Spiritualism, placing its defense firmly upon moral and philosophical grounds, in terms incapable of being misunderstood. We have been made glad at seeing that this Bureau has wrought much and good work toward answering the various objections which have been published by secular newspapers regarding the Spiritual Phenomena, and their teachings, and trust that under the new arrangement it may add to its already abundant laurels.

In order to do so—with strict fair-dealing toward the gentlemen who propose to utilize their valuable powers in the work above named—material support, by way of pecuniary subscriptions, is necessary. The purpose is eminently worthy the attention of the friends of Spiritualism everywhere. Donations to the BUREAU FUND, forwarded to this office, will be promptly acknowledged and placed to the credit of the Bureau Committee, subject to its order.

Banner of Light.

APPENDIX F.

VOICES FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD.

THE PRESS AND THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE.

THE following extracts are from a communication given at the Banner Free Circle Room, Nov. 22, 1880. The Spirit-Author claimed to be the late HENRY J. RAYMOND, founder of the *New York Daily Times* :

“I would refer to the Editor-at-Large Project, which has been before the public during the last year. Many months ago, certain spirits who have the interests of humanity ever before them, organized themselves into a band for the further advancement of Spiritualism on earth, and to perform more effective labor in its behalf. It had long been apparent that the truths of Spiritualism reach the masses only in a diluted and distorted form, under the misrepresentations frequently given to the subject through the columns of many theological and secular publications. Violent and scurrilous attacks upon Spiritualism and its followers are made with impunity by writers and speakers who know nothing of the subject they condemn, but whose only object is to cast ridicule and odium upon our cause. This is done, from time to time, in the pulpits, from the rostrum, and in the columns of daily and weekly newspapers ; also in those periodicals and magazines where one has a right to look for truthful statements and scientific asseverations ; while we have not had one pen to take up these false representations of Spiritualism and refute them by the statement of honest facts, and to demand a hearing from our side in the columns of these same publications.

Some time ago, the question was mooted of employing some able, com-

petent Spiritualist to keep himself informed concerning the attitude of the religious and secular press of the country towards Spiritualism, and to hold himself in readiness at all times to wield his pen in behalf of truth, by refuting the false representations of our opponents concerning our cause, and setting its true merits before the public in their proper light. For this purpose, and for this only, was the Editor-at-Large office created, which Prof. S. B. Brittan, of New York city, was called upon to fill, entirely independent of the Spiritual press, and I dare to say that he has filled the position assigned him in a manner highly creditable to himself and to the Spiritual cause. Those people who are unbiased and candid, who are familiar with the career and labors of Prof. Brittan during the last thirty years in the fields of Spiritualism, will not question his ability to fill this office. Let those self-opinionated, prejudiced people who appreciate the ideas of others only when they harmonize with their own, cavil as they will.

Those who look only upon the surface of things may imagine this is a pleasant position to fill and an easy labor to perform; but you have no idea of the stupendous task it is to read up most of the publications of the day, and to keep watch over the columns of the press of this country, in order to be in readiness to refute charges made against Spiritualism and its followers, and send the arrow of Truth home to the heart of Error, by revealing to the outside world the true status of this mighty philosophy, which numbers among its followers millions of respectable people. I venture to say, not one of our writers or lecturers would care to undertake this work, unaided and alone, notwithstanding the cries which have been raised to the contrary, while indeed many of the publications demanding the attention of such an officer are unread and unheeded by these same busy writers and speakers.

The office of Editor-at-Large was discussed and planned in the Spiritual World long before a committee of mortals was formed to further its advancement, and I affirm that its mission is an important one. It takes no work from the hands of any one; there is labor enough for all to perform; it does not set one man over all Spiritualists as their censor, or otherwise limit the freedom of individual thought and opinion. There is much opposition and some ill-will among Spiritualists concerning this office, owing to a misunderstanding of its mission. It is not for the expression of individual idiosyncrasies, but it is designed to represent clearly the truths of Spiritualism to humanity; its field of usefulness is out in the theological and secular world, where bigotry and error hold sway, and it works for the material interest of no Spiritualist and no spiritual jour-

nal under the sun. That the office of Editor-at-Large was created in the interest of the publishers of the *Banner of Light*, those who have watched the course of those gentlemen, and that of their paper during the last twenty years, do not need my voice in refutation of such an assertion.

The only articles from the pen of the Editor-at-Large, written in the interests of that office which are published in the columns of the *Banner*, are such as—having been respectfully declined by those publications for which they were penned—would reach the public in no other way, and such as the *Spiritual World* have deemed it important to republish in its columns for the instruction and benefit of its readers. But I need not enlarge. All that I can say on this important subject has been well and aptly said by Judge Nelson Cross, in a recent issue of the *Banner of Light*. His opinion I indorse, *in toto*.

Prof. Brittan, in his capacity of Editor-at-Large, has written many articles, and replied to many criticisms. We are so well satisfied with the result of this year's doings that we desire to extend the experiment another year, and we call upon all our friends who favor this work to assist us in its advancement by contributing whatever sums of money they can afford to the Editor-at-Large fund. As there are those who look upon this project with disfavor, they are not called upon to contribute one penny for its support; and I may say that, while our friends who have contributed to this work, and who feel its importance, are satisfied with its expenditure of their money, with the result of the labors performed by the Editor-at-Large, we consider it no concern of those who look upon it sneeringly, whether or not the result is as favorable as was expected.

We have given this method of employing one pen and one mind in the field of secularism a trial, and we are satisfied with the result. Error and opposition have been rebuked; the truths and beauties of our Spiritual Philosophy clearly placed before the eyes of thousands who would have met them in no other way and through no other channel, and I am pleased to believe that the labor is well worth the expense and trouble it has cost."

FROM THE SPIRIT OF THE LATE DR. H. F. GARDNER, OF BOSTON.

"I observe that there is a project started to raise a fund to support an Editor-at-Large, who will undertake to defend Spiritualism and other liberal views. This is one of the most important movements of the age. The secular press is teeming with petty slurs and misrepresentations of Spiritualism and its friends. Spiritualists now have become such a body in the United States that the time has arrived to make themselves heard and

felt among the people. In order to do this they must have one well versed in liberal ideas, fully competent to reply to whatever comes, and who will use his time and talents in defense of our philosophy and in illustration of reformatory measures. Certainly to do this we need a fund to begin with, because it will take the whole time and strength of such a person to be devoted to this purpose. I do hope that the Spiritualists of America will see to it that this project is not allowed to rest, but let it go on, for the Spirit-world has really started it, and we do not mean that it shall fall through. Spiritualism is of great importance; it is spreading far and wide; it is not a thing to be crushed or to be shunned, but really an Angel of Light, who comes with glad tidings of peace and good will to all men."

TRANSMUNDANE CORRESPONDENCE.

HORACE GREELEY TO THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE.

To the Editor of the *Banner of Light*:

After reading the message of one of the master-spirits of our Metropolitan journalism—HENRY J. RAYMOND, former Editor-in-Chief of the New York daily *Times*—on the office and the work of the Editor-at-Large—which spirit-communication appeared in your editorial columns on the 11th instant—I was disposed to query whether the eminent and honored founder of the *Tribune* would be likely to take a similar interest in this method of informing the universal mind on the important subject of Spiritualism. While in doubt on this point I received your private note of the 14th instant, as if in response to my silent questioning. I may possibly have somewhere merely mentioned his name in this connection, since of late I have often been reminded of him and have felt a vague sense of his presence. You will recall the fact that reference was made in your note to an interview with the Spirits, which occurred on Sunday evening, the 12th; also that you enclosed and forwarded to me the following spiritual telegram, Dr. W.E. Channing being the communicating spirit at the time:

MESSAGE FROM THE SPIRIT.

"Mr. Greeley says he is in entire sympathy with the Editor-at-Large

project, and will lend his strength to promote the object in view. He cannot at present control this medium, but hopes to at a future day, and will communicate directly with the gentleman in New York."

On Monday, the 20th instant, six days after the above was received by me, I called to see Dr. J. V. Mansfield on an errand of business. While seated in his room and in conversation on the subject matter which had prompted me to seek the interview, I was suddenly impressed that the great journalist was present, and would then and there make his communication. I mentioned to Mr. M. that I had received assurance from Boston that a message would be given to me at New York by a certain spirit whom I would not name. It chanced that only a few moments before the Doctor had occasion to express himself with great plainness on a subject which excited strong mental emotions, and on this account he thought the time inopportune. I, however, determined to make a single experimental trial, feeling all the while that I should not fail to elicit a response. Seating myself in an opposite corner of the room, quite removed from the medium's observation, I hastily wrote with a pencil the following note :

"HON. HORACE GREELEY : I have been informed by our mutual friend, Rev. Dr. Channing, that you will come to me in this city and make a communication of your views at a convenient opportunity. Is it your pleasure to speak to me here and now ?
S. B. BRITTAN."

This note was carefully concealed by a *six-fold covering of white paper*, handed to Mr. Mansfield and sealed with mucilage. In one minute the hand of the medium moved and the following was written :

"DEAR BRITTAN : Thanks for heeding the request—made through the representative of that paper of papers—to come and talk with one who, while in mortal life, was an admirer of your writings, whatever the subject you grappled with. In fact your works or books were more frequently before me than all others on the subject of Spiritualism.

"I have watched your career touching these things closely since my de-

parture from your city. I have been more than gratified to know *you have met with such signal success in bringing spiritual matters before the world through the secular press.* I ought to have been more liberal than I seemed to be, in admitting facts of a spiritual nature into the *Tribune*. But I was not all of that paper, you must know. . . .

“Well, what I have to say in particular, about the matter of Editor-at-Large, is : *Do not falter in your exertions to keep the interest alive ; your course is the right one, and THE ONLY ONE TO REACH THE MASSES.* If I can inspire you with a deeper interest than that already manifest on your part, I shall be but too happy to do so. So work on, dear Brittan.

“H. GREELEY.”

FROM HON. JOHN WORTH EDMONDS.

About the holiday season Dr. Brittan called one day on J. V. Mansfield to inquire after the health of himself and family, and to congratulate him on the surprising progress of the spiritual cause throughout the civilized world. During the interview the spirits signaled their presence, when the following communication from the Judge was given :

“DEAR BRITTAN—I rejoice exceedingly to take you by the hand again. I have not absented myself from you since my advent in the spirit-world. While I lived in the body we seldom disagreed on any important matter. I have often had the pleasure of looking over your remarks in the papers since my arrival here. Your fearless manner of dealing with the subject of spirit-intercourse I always admired, and not less so since I became a spirit. I consider the move to make you Editor-at-Large was in a great measure brought about by my influence, and somewhat that of N. P. Tallmadge. The step is one in the right direction, and it must succeed ; you need have no fears. Our mutual friends, Dr. R. T. Hallock and Robert Dale Owen, are exerting themselves in this behalf. Again I say, Bro. Brittan, fear not, we are with you. JOHN W. EDMONDS.”

LETTERS FROM EMINENT LITERARY PERSONS.

The writer had several interesting conversations with the spirits through the mediumship of MISS M. T. SHELHAMER, known to all Spiritualists as the worthy successor of the late Mrs. Conant and

the late Mrs. Rudd. At the opening public seance for the season—at the *Banner* Public Circle-room, on the 6th of September, 1881, Judge Edmonds made an address through the medium, concerning the importance of the Secular Press Bureau, which appeared in the first number of the enlarged *Banner*. Many intelligent spirits who were influential while on earth came unsolicited to the writer in private at every convenient opportunity. Among these we may record the honored names of Dr. W. E. Channing, Rev. John Pierpont, Hon. N. P. Tallmadge, Judge John W. Edmonds, Horace Greeley, Henry J. Raymond, Dr. H. F. Gardner, William Berry, Mrs. Frances H. Green McDougal, George Ripley and N. P. Willis. The general drift of these communications is clearly enough indicated by the subjoined examples :

FROM GEORGE RIPLEY LL. D.,

The late eminent literary critic of the New York Tribune.

“MY GOOD FRIEND : I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without availing myself of it for the purpose of this message. I wish you to know that I am interested in the good work inaugurated by the Spiritual World through your instrumentality. I refer to the Secular Press Bureau. It is an important service that will not soon terminate. With an organized staff under your general direction, a great work may be accomplished that will spiritualize the people. The world needs to be awakened and stimulated in the intellectual region as well as spiritualized, and this end may be achieved by yourself and your band of helpers. Go on, *in God's name, go on* ; not to your own detriment, but to your own honor and the glory of the cause you represent.

“Intelligent and wise spirits have watched your career and your work in the spiritual cause. They desire to place you in circumstances where you will not need to be troubled concerning your daily bread. You have been called to the duties of the Secular Press Office, and the way is about to be opened for you to receive aid from another source, giving you the power to outwork or embody in more consecutive form your abilities and the labors of your life. You may still direct the Secular Press Bureau movement to the further advancement of Truth and the lasting benefit of Humanity.

“As one of your private band I come to-day, expressing myself but feebly, and am,
 Yours truly,
 “GEORGE RIPLEY.”

FROM MRS. FRANCES H. GREEN MCDUGAL.

The immortal author of the following communication was for several years a member of the writer's household, and she was greatly beloved by every member of the family. Her life was that of an earnest and true reformer, whose love of truth and humanity was so strong that she seldom gave a thought to any personal or selfish interest. Mrs. McDougal was a person of deep feeling, great intellectual capacity, and remarkable purity of life. She was familiar with popular science and English literature, and a vigorous prose writer. Her gift of poesy revealed such a power of constructive ideality as fairly entitled her to a place in the front rank of our American poets :

“MY DEAR FRIEND: I approach you with a feeling that I shall be welcome, while I rejoice in the assurance of your presence. I know that we are *kindred* as well as friends. Your dear companion is present, and desires me to waft her love and blessing to you, and to assure you that all your dear ones are happy, safe in the beautiful Spirit-World.

“My dear friend, I deeply sympathize with you in your late affliction ; but I feel that *you know* that your beloved son still lives, is safe and happy in the Eternal World. He is no more subject to pain ; his languor and weariness have passed away, and health and joy are his portion forever. Knowing this it is your privilege to rejoice, even in suffering, in the blessed assurance that you will meet each loved one in the By-and-by.

“Dear friend, I am more than glad in view of the great and good work that has opened to you since my departure from the body. I am happy to find you still in the harness, and to know that whatever you may do, will be done well. I do not flatter you ; I have always felt this, and only speak the truth in love.

“I know that I have influenced you in the past. I shall delight to do so in the future, assisting in your work, and blessing you, whenever possible, with a new influx of spiritual power.

“I remain, my dear friend, as ever, bound to you by ties of tenderest affection.

“FRANCES H. GREEN MCDUGAL.”

FROM NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS, THE AMERICAN POET.

One of the founders of the New York Home Journal.

"I rejoice at this meeting, and especially that I am able to commune with you, however imperfectly. I would coöperate in your work. Not a few, but many spirits are interested in you and your present sphere of action. I would have you know that I, for one, take an abiding interest in your labors. I have watched your progress for years; have observed the good accomplished, and have felt that your powers should be utilized in sending the truth through channels of wider circulation. I have endeavored to impress you with a sense of my presence within the last twelve months.*

"I desire to have you understand that I most heartily endorse the Editor-at-Large and his work. I speak for others as well as myself. *It is our most earnest desire to see this work go on.* It is needed. Truth deserves to have a wide hearing.

"The golden rays of morning stream upon an awakened world! The early risers behold the glorious light and are glad; but many yet slumber. We want heralds to arouse the people. You have been first selected, and are foremost in this work. Through the agency of the secular press you

* This refers to a remarkable experience in New York. One night in the month of January last, while the Editor-at-Large *solus* was at his work, he was honored by a large number of visitors. This reception was unexpected and otherwise extraordinary. The company was chiefly composed of distinguished journalists and literary people, whose presence in our sanctum was accompanied by the recognition of electric forces in the air and over the body, and a feeling of unusual mental exaltation. We recognized several of the spirits at sight; among the number were M. M. Noah, Carlos D. Stuart, Horace Greeley, George P. Morris, N. P. Willis, Alice and Phœbe Cary. These were followed by a shadowy host, whose imperfect outlines did not admit of identification.

So real was this visitation that we at once wrote a private letter to Luther Colby, making particular mention of the above names, at the same time assuring him that *we should soon receive communications from those spirits.* Without special solicitation the anticipated messages followed in the order in which the authors appeared, and are herein mentioned, most of them through the mediumship of Dr. Mansfield and Miss Shelhamer. From Mr. Noah, C. D. Stuart and Horace Greeley, messages were made directly to the writer. One from the author of "Woodman, Spare that Tree," first appeared in the message Department of the *Banner of Light*, and contained a distinct reference to the author's presence at the spiritual reception in New York, of which the medium, Miss Shelhamer, had no knowledge. The present communication from N. P. Willis, author of "Rural Letters," "Sacred Poems," etc., came spontaneously in our presence, through the same medium, and we see no reason to question its authenticity.

may reach and awaken the drowsy millions to the realities and glories of the Day!

We will do all in our power to sustain and strengthen you, and we trust that mortals will second our purposes that we may be strengthened in return. More help is needed—more material aid, and we shall send out our messengers, here and there, to impress the people to render the required assistance.

“Yours in fraternal love,

“N. P. WILLIS.”

Wherever we go—in the darkness and the light, which are alike to the spirit's vision—our footsteps are followed by watchful guardians of our lives. Those who discern spiritual things have within themselves the demonstration of their constant presence and solicitude for human welfare. When the veil is rendered thin and shadowy by a growing spirituality of feeling, thought and life; when it is suddenly rent by some mortal shock; or otherwise by the opening—through spiritual agency—of the inner avenues of perception, the luminous cloud appears in the heavens and the immortal witnesses stand revealed to the conscious soul. Under the spell of a divine enchantment we rise to a higher life and a nobler fellowship in the heavens. Well might the great Poet-philosopher of all the ages—while from his illuminated brain and over his responsive nerves were transmitted sublime monitions from the Spirit-World—make a poor mortal say,

“I bear a charmed life.”

It was ever thus since the sensitive soul first recognized a spiritual presence, and this experience will be repeated so long as time endures. In all things we discover the evidences of a divine presence—“the Father of the spirits of all flesh”—and blessed forever be his loving angels, who come and go and minister to the lives and loves of poor tempest-tossed mortals on the sea of life. Happy is that man whose hopes are anchored in Heaven.

Our angels come and go at will
 On errands of celestial love,
 Our hungry souls on earth to fill,
 With manna from the realms above.

Now come what will, we should not fear, but feel secure under the brooding presence of his love. Should sudden darkness fall on our humble pathway, and the gathering storm of adverse fortune sweep away every mortal support, as it already has the last vestige of our temporal possessions, leaving only the ruin of all earthly hopes and a wide scene of mortal desolation, *we may still trust in the Love and Wisdom that preside over all*. At best all temporal possessions depend on the limits of our lease of life. And what is death but a mere circumstance in the endless cycles of being? We know that this ephemeral existence is not all of life. Let us rejoice that there are other and more beautiful spheres where needy souls find a suitable inheritance, congenial companionship and occupation, and a sweet HOME forever—

“Where storms are Summer flaws compared with mine.”

It is enough if we but *know* that in the fierce tempest that rends the sails of our frail bark, that shivers the tall mast and sends the trembling mortal to his resting-place in coral caves, the triumphant spirit finds happy release and its passport to the peaceful lands of the blessed. As supreme Power, infinite Love, and omniscient Wisdom govern the Universe, ALL MUST BE WELL AT LAST.

“Blow, winds of night ! your force combine.
 Without His high behest,
 Ye cannot in the mountain pine
 Disturb the sparrow’s nest.”

S. B. B.

APPENDIX G.

FRATERNAL SALUTATION.

TO LUTHER COLBY, NESTOR OF THE SPIRITUAL PRESS.

I AM just now reminded that the issue of the BANNER for the current week completes the twenty-fifth year of its publication, and that during this long and eventful period you have been Chief of its Editorial Staff. A quarter of a century of constant service in this particular relation is a fact worthy of special recognition as something which has never before occurred, and is not likely to happen again in the experience of any other man among the faithful recorders of the facts and the honored exponents of the philosophy of Spiritualism. When we think of the vicissitudes incident to all human affairs, and especially of the uncertain tenure of new enterprises, founded upon ideas which have yet to win their way to general acceptance, we may well be surprised, that you have found it possible to honor the profession by the constant occupation of your chair for so long a period.

No one but a journalist of real ability and large experience can form any just estimate of the extent of the labors you have performed in the quarter of a century now closed. The editorial task of a journalist devoted to a Reformation which must encounter the strong prejudices of the world, is no holiday amusement. Mere idlers in the drama of life may conduct the by-play, but his *role* calls for clearly-defined ideas, a resolute purpose and earnest work.

Only a man who has had a similar experience can form any intelligent conception of the difficulties you must have been obliged to encounter and to overcome. How often you have checked the natural impulse to administer stern reproofs to thoughtless and insolent faultfinders; how many days of anxious care and nights of restless thought and painful deliberation have been caused by the unreasonable demands, personal interests and conflicting opinions of others; and how much of forbearance you may have been called upon to exercise under strong provocation, no one will ever know.

Of course I cannot presume that you have avoided all asperity of feeling, and all errors of thought, judgment, purpose and action, since you possess all the elements of our imperfect human nature. The earnest, impetuous spirit that is in you may have been chafed to exasperation by the rude conflict of the world; but I am pleased to know, and to bear emphatic testimony to the fact, that in all your journalistic labors and trials you have—with scarcely an exception—preserved a uniform respect for the proprieties of speech, the amenities of polite discussion and the true dignity of the profession, alike honorable to yourself and gratifying to the better class of your contemporaries.

Permit me to say that your publishing-house has well earned its good name and honorable position by the force of a strong conviction; by fidelity to a settled purpose, and by steady and earnest labor. You have not been turned aside by the most formidable obstacles in your way. Your constant aim has never been interrupted by opposition, or the alluring promises of more lucrative enterprises. In the midst of thick clouds and sudden disaster you have cheerfully kept the even tenor of your way. When destruction came like a thief in the night, your assets fed the devouring element: the forked tongues of conflagration licked up the life-blood of years of successful business; but you were neither cast down

nor greatly depressed. Inspired by a lively sense of the importance of your work, and the faith that man is greater than the sum of his accidents—while standing in the deep shadow of what seemed a great misfortune—you achieved a new conquest over the force of circumstances, and a nobler establishment rose, phoenix-like, from the ashes of the old.

To-day, Sir, I supplement my words of friendly greeting with All hail! The times favor the success of your enterprise. It is a privilege to live now which never fell to the lot of mortals in earlier times when nations were subject to despotic masters. We ought to rejoice in the light, and make the most of our opportunities. Our love of democratic principles must have expression now, while the political and spiritual despotisms of the world are in the last throes of dissolution. It is our pride and the glory of the Age, that we have lived to see the Printing-Press the great engine of power in America and elsewhere among the most enlightened nations of the earth.

And here I am painfully reminded that the power of the press is sometimes exercised for base purposes. Some men use it to secure the ends of an unworthy ambition; to excite political animosity, sectarian warfare and social discord; to hold back those who are likely to distance them in the life-race for honorable distinction; and to defame innocent people who, by rising above the low plane of their self-love, may have won the championship of beneficent purpose and manly achievement. These evils force themselves upon our recognition. Still the Press is our prime minister of Light, Liberty and Law. What we most need to secure all the rights of mankind; to purify the ultimate sources of political power; to cleanse and regulate the machinery of government; to rationalize theology and religion; and, withal, to secure the most sacred interests of the social state and our highest spiritual aspirations—is *an honest man in every editorial sanctum*, and a steady hand

at the throttle-valve of physical force applied to the moral purposes of life.

With us imperial prerogatives, hereditary honors and court decorations, must always remain at a heavy discount. *We look to Nature for our titles of nobility.* In a nation of freemen, the man who would be truly honored must first fairly win for himself the high plaudit of "*Well done, good and faithful servant.*" I accept the responsibility of the present application of these words; and I am sure you have many readers who will warmly respond to my closing sentiment—inspired by the nature of this occasion: *Let those wear crowns who have earned them, and leave the scepters of influence in the hands of such as have the justice to wield them with becoming moderation.*

With cordial appreciation of your labors, I remain, in the fraternity of the Spirit,

Yours truly,

S. B. BRITTAN.

29 Broad Street, Newark N. J., }
 March 18, 1882. }

THE EDITOR-AT-LARGE FUND.

LIST OF NAMES AND RESIDENCES OF SUBSCRIBERS

FOR THE YEARS 1880 AND 1881.

A FRIEND of the <i>Banner of Light</i>	\$1000 00
Colby & Rich, Boston, Mass.....	100 00
Jerome Fassler, Sr., Springfield, Ohio.....	100 00
Henry J. Newton, 128 West 43d St., New York.....	200 00
Luther Colby.....	72 00
L. Downing, Jr., Concord, N. H.....	20 00
Mrs. Flora B. Cabell, Washington, D. C.....	10 00
P. Pollock, Virginia City, Nev.....	5 50

Carried forward.....\$1507 50

Brought forward...	\$1507 50
E. P. Upton, Derry, N. H.....	10 00
Mrs. Almira P. Thayer, Vernon, Vt.....	2 00
P. S. Briggs, Charlestown, Mass.....	10 00
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Daniel Baldwin, Montpelier, Vt.....	1 00
D. T. Averill, Northfield, Vt.....	1 00
Almeida A. Fordtram, Industry, Texas.....	5 60
Friend, Islington, Mass.....	1 00
Gad Norton, Bristol, Conn.....	2 00
George A. Bacon, Boston, Mass.....	2 00
Augustus Day, Detroit, Mich.....	6 00
M. V. Lincoln, Boston, Mass.....	1 00
A. P. Webber, " ".....	2 00
William Luther, Rochester, N. Y.....	5 00
W. H. Crocker, Port Allen, Iowa.....	2 00
E. C. Hart, Oberlin, O.....	5 00
B. C. T. Morgan, St. Louis, Mo.....	1 85
H.....	5 00
"An Old Subscriber," Brooklyn, N. Y.....	10 00
Mrs. E. Bruce. (C. D. L.) New York.....	10 00
Amos Kent, Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.....	2 00
Nathan Johnson, New Bedford, Mass.....	2 00
M. W. Comstock, Niantic, Conn.....	1 00
M. Larkin, Downingtown, Penn.....	5 00
Mrs. L. A. Mason, Richmond, Va.....	1 00
Jacob Booth, Maquon, Ill.....	1 00
Paul Fisher, Brooklyn, N. Y.....	3 50
C. H. Stimpson, Brockton, Mass.....	4 00
E. R. Kirk, New York City.....	5 00
Miss N. R. Batchelder, Mt. Vernon, N. H.....	2 00
Mrs. C. M. E., Baltimore, Md.....	10 00
Mrs. H. J. Severance, Tunbridge, Vt.....	3 00
C. Snyder, Baltimore, Md.....	4 00
Dansville, N. Y.....	1 00
Yarmouth, N. S.....	4 00
Mary S. Lloyd, Waterford, N. Y.....	2 00
Lester Woodward, Orange, N. J.....	2 00
Carried forward.....	\$1647 45

Brought forward	\$1647 45
James Shackleton, Lawrence, Mass.	5 00
William Hickok, 26 West 52d Street, N. Y.	5 00
W. B. Johnson, Hartford, Conn.	4 00
Mary Griffith, Salem, O.	2 75
Josiah Adams, Quincy, Mass.	2 00
D. Higbie, M. D., Burton, Mich.	1 00
Isaac Sharp, Fremont, O.	5 00
Wm. B. Allen, Keene, N. H.	5 00
George H. Woodis, Worcester, Mass.	5 00
Friend, Providence, R. I.	4 00
W. M. Haskell, Marblehead, Mass.	4 00
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A Friend, Baltimore, Md	5 00
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Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, San Francisco, Cal.	1 00
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J. Burroughs, Stevensville, Pa.	1 00
Mrs. Rebecca Bowker, Boston Highlands, Mass.	2 00
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Widow's Mite.	1 00
Mrs. H., New York City.	2 00
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L. Fisk, Alabama, N. Y.	1 00
Mrs. Mary F. Warden, Keosauqua, Iowa.	1 00
Mrs. Luke C. Langley, Exeter, N. H.	5 00

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William Clapperton, Amsterdam, N. Y.....	1 00
Orin Greeley, Stevensville, Wis.....	4 00
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Mrs. Wm. Carrington, San Francisco, Cal.....	5 00
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Memphis, Tenn.....	1 80
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H. G. C., St. Louis, Mo.....	20 00
Moses Sibley, N. Springfield, Mo.....	2 00
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E. M. J., Vermont.....	1 00
Jacob Booth, Eureka Springs, Ark.....	2 00
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A. E. Giles, Hyde Park, Mass.....	10 00
H. N. Graves, Providence, R. I.....	1 00
Francis Howard, Northfield, Minn.....	5 00
James Colbath, Alton, N. H.....	4 00
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J. W. Taft, New England Village, Mass.....	1 00
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H. Hayes, Muir, Mich.....	1	00
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C. T. Crosby, Ft. Dodge, Iowa.....	2	00
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A. Farnsworth, M.D., East Saginaw, Mich.....	1 40
Alfred G. Badger, 179 Broadway, New York.....	10 00
M. E. Congar, Chicago, Ill.....	2 00
B. F. Close, Columbia, Cal.....	3 00
Charles Partridge, N. Y. City (to be paid in books), \$50 00.....	
Total.....	\$2,750 10

THE MANSFIELD CONTRIBUTION TO THE S. P. B. FUND.

The result of DR. J. V. MANSFIELD'S most generous proposition to aid the Secular Press Bureau Fund by the contribution of his services in answering sealed letters, resulted in the addition of the liberal sum of *one hundred and sixty dollars and fifteen cents to that Fund*, as will appear from the subjoined reports. The following subscriptions were forwarded directly to the Editor-at-large, the figures representing the net amounts received by the Secular Press Bureau :

Eben Snow, Cambridge, Mass.....	\$3 00
F. W. Smith, Rockland, Me.....	3 00
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	\$78 90

MRS. MARY A. NEWTON'S REPORT.

Letters were received by Mrs. Newton from the following named persons containing the several sums indicated, and the aggregate amount (\$81.25) was—in pursuance of the Mansfield proposal—added to the Editor-at-Large Fund.

Dr. Bedortha, Saratoga Springs.....	\$3 00
Mrs. Truman P. Allen, Gowanda, N. Y.....	3 00
J. W. Butler, Fulton, N. Y.....	3 00
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Carried forward.	\$9 00

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John Lasselle, Waterville, Me.....	3 00
Edward Green, Lacon, Ill.....	3 75
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A Friend, Glens Falls, N. Y.....	3 00
Daniel Field, Brockton, Mass.....	3 00
T. C. Gaston, Atlantic, Penn.....	3 00
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B., Box 5152, Boston, Mass.....	3 00
L. A. Cummings, Dubuque, Iowa.....	3 00
Samuel F. Hickox, Portage, Ohio.....	3 00
D. E. Blood, Greenville, N. H.....	3 00
P. D. Willis, Hartford, Conn.....	3 00
Total.....	<u>\$81 25</u>

Very sincerely,

MARY A. NEWTON.

Received by Dr. Brittan.....	\$78 90
Amount forwarded to Mrs. Newton.....	81 25
Total sum of the Mansfield contribution.....	<u>\$160 15</u>
Brought forward from page 508.....	2,750 10
Total amount contributed to the Editor-at-Large Fund..	<u>\$2,910 25</u>



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